The
COMMONWEAL

VOLUME XLV *December 6, 1946* NUMBER 8

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THE COMMONWEAL *is indexed in the Reader's Guide, Catholic Periodical Index and Catholic Bookman. Founded by the Calvert Associates, Inc., in* 1924, *with Michael Williams as President and Editor.*

Published weekly and copyrighted 1946 in the U. S. A. by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. AShland 4-9685. Entered as second class matter February 9, 1934, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. U.S. and Canada $6 a year, Foreign $7. Single copies 15c.

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One of the Worst Headaches

THINGS have reached the point where everybody is blaming everybody else. The National Association of Real Estate Boards ascribes the trouble to government maintenance of rent ceilings. House expediter Wilson Wyatt, who is certainly straining every nerve, tangles with RFC Director George E. Allen for refusing to approve sufficient loans to assist certain potential large-scale producers of prefabricated houses in getting started. The American Legion special housing subcommittee, after granting Mr. Wyatt a figurative E for effort, unanimously recommends the abolishing of his office and of the whole Federal Public Housing Agency; instead a new committee comprised of seven veterans of World War II should be given charge of a new national veterans housing program.

However the blame is to be allocated, the situation is all too plain—and made dramatic from time to time in newspaper items on American families living in old jalopies and inflammable tarpaper shacks. The nation is still desperately short of homes. One index is furnished by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, who found from questionnaires sent to veterans in Illinois that 56 percent of the veterans in question were doubling up and that over 82 percent were after homes which would rent for $50 per month or less. It is not only that reasonably priced homes today are simply not to be had, but that the prospects for new housing are so skimpy—it all sounds terribly out of hand.

Mr. Wyatt set his sights on starting 1,200,000 new dwelling units during 1946. But what is so disturbing is not the unlikelihood of reaching such a goal by the New Year but that so small a portion of these units will actually have been completed. *Business Week* has made one heartily practical suggestion, limited as its scope may be. The editor points out that when a home which should be built in three months requires six or seven—because pressure to start new projects has accentuated knockdown, drag-out competition for the limited stock of available building materials—costs go skyrocketing. One palliative, then, is a shift in emphasis from starting new building to completing what is already in various stages of reaching skyward. This would mean a reduced objective but one somewhat likely of attainment; so realistic a modification of program might prevent the breakdown of the national housing effort which now threatens.

Such a revision would constitute a first and immediate step. Thereafter we must gird ourselves for a fresh beginning. Something along the lines of the Wagner-Taft-Ellender Bill, which last spring died in committee, is indicated for the new Republican Congress for one thing. A more liberal RFC policy toward major and minor prefabricators would also help. But the objective of adequate postwar housing is beyond the reach of a people not aroused to its key importance in the national life.

Canada's Immigration Policy

IT IS, of course, none of our business to tell Canada what she should do about immigration. We naturally have our opinion, and it is that Canadian policy in this respect, like our own, should be made as liberal as it possibly can be. But to do more than say this much would certainly be a case of the pot calling the kettle black. There is, however, one aspect of Canadian immigration policy which has led to the making public of certain facts which we think deserve to be more widely known. Canada's policy gives preference to farmers, excluding persons who are likely to add to the urban population. Probably this is a result of what is regarded as an unbalance between present urban and farm population in the Dominion, yet its practical effect is to exclude precisely those persons most in need of a haven in our contemporary world—particularly what Jews remain in Europe. And the irony of the situation is that these very emigrants have a remarkable record in the United States for returning to the land at the very moment when the

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general population trend is in the opposite direction. Furthermore, the present Jewish generation in Europe, thanks partly to Zionist propaganda, is very land-conscious.

Fairly recently this Canadian immigration policy led to a visit to Montreal by Dr. Gabriel Davidson, managing director of the Jewish Agricultural Society, an organization to which THE COMMONWEAL has in the past from time to time called the attention of its readers. In the course of a most informative address made by Dr. Davidson before a small group in Montreal, he had occasion to tell of the farming record of Jewish refugees entering the United States during the period of Hitler's persecution. The following two paragraphs, we believe, have a very general interest:

> Have refugee farmers made good? The records of the Jewish Agricultural Society are replete with stories of determination and perseverance which refugee farmers exhibited to attain a foothold on American soil. A banker and his wife did not regard it as too menial to take jobs in a household in order to obtain the wherewithal for a start. A Viennese physician had no hesitancy about peddling the eggs from his poultry farm so as to get the higher retail price. The wife of a once well to do manufacturer who had been sheltered and protected, learned quickly how to feed and milk the family cow. A Rabbi served as a night watchman to build up the modest farm which he bought on slender means. The editor of a trade journal, a lawyer by profession, limited his initial household furniture to a bed, table and a few chairs in order to put his every available dollar to productive farm purposes. A woman who came to the States in 1940, single-handedly worked up a farm with the aim of establishing thereon a son who was then in Palestine—an aim which was fulfilled when the son came here a year or so ago. Another woman—a Polish emigré, with a Ph.D. from the University of Vienna, formerly a foreign language teacher, abandoned social work in the United States in favor of a poultry farm. "The work is hard and there is lots of it," she told a news reporter. "But here I am and I hope to remain here."
>
> One case is so striking that I cannot resist the temptation to go into a little detail. In 1940 a refugee from Germany bought a farm in Abbington, Connecticut. He was totally without funds. And yet he gave such promise that the National Refugee Service turned over to him as an outright gift a fund of $750 contributed by a Christian church group, and likewise joined the Jewish Agricultural Society in lending him enough money for the purchase of a modest farm. Starting from scratch, on a neglected farm, with run out fields and leaky buildings, this refugee has completely rejuvenated the outfit. Buildings have been repaired, new ones put up, roofs mended, the house painted, livestock increased, inventory expanded, so that within the short space of four years the farm real estate has doubled in value and the personal property is now worth $5,000. This man has become one of the most respected farmers in a typical New England community. Neighbors come to him for advice. His home was the center of Red Cross activity because his wife is an expert in needlework. One of his two sons served in the United States Army.

The moral of all this is fairly clear: Restricting immigration on a basis of previous profession will not necessarily yield the result that might be expected.

What Are We Going to Do?

BRIEFLY, the present situation with regard to our helping the rest of the world in its lessened but continuing food needs is as follows. Certain aspects of UNRRA seem so greatly to have displeased American public opinion that it was decided many months ago to discontinue this agency. Americans were particularly annoyed because they felt that UNRRA relief, principally financed by this country, was being withheld from our friends and used to feed our enemies. It was then suggested that a UN organization be set up for relief purposes, and now we find the United States and England opposed both to the continuance of UNRRA and to the suggested UN organization. It is proposed that America from now on will help singly nations whose need is brought to the attention of our Congress. Meanwhile Mr. La Guardia expresses his strong opposition, with Canada, Australia and Russia in agreement, and, we understand, with the general approval of the Vatican. Certainly principle would seem to be on that side. If we are to have any really effective international cooperation on any level, surely we should be able to work it out on the level of feeding the hungry, where politics do not belong, even if occasionally doing the job internationally means helping people of whom we are not overfond. Piecemeal congressional appropriations inspire mighty little hope.

"Ten Little Indians"

IF IT WERE NOT that you are supposed to look as if you were earning your pay, the best thing to do would be to copy out Thomas Jefferson's letter of January, 1806, to the chiefs of the Osage, of the Missouris, of the Kansas, of the Otoes, of the Pawnees, of the Pocas and of the Sioux, together with Meyer Berger's dispatch from Ponca City, Oklahoma—both of which the New York *Times* published on November 14, 1946. But there is no space for these texts so that I have to mess them up by quoting and tying the quotes together.

Don't worry; this is not going to be an Indian lament. The Indians have been pushed out of the picture long ago, and whatever lamenting there has been about how it was done has been wailed into the empty air long since. The Indians were in the way and, once they had provided paintings of Custer's Last Stand for the barrooms of America, they were put where they could be seen, by tourists, and not heard—until the tourists parked their cars and stood in a circle listening to the drums and the harmless whoops. Thus they had a better fate than the buffaloes.

The Otoes who were among the recipients of

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President Jefferson's letter now number eight hundred and forty-two. A century and a half ago there must have been more of them because otherwise Jefferson would not have bothered to write them a letter that is too long for us to print. Well, anyway, Mr. Berger says that three hundred Otoes assembled in Ponca City the other day. "Some of their women came in nylons, in stone-martens and in modish coats and dresses; some in blankets. Some of the elders wore the traditional feather headdress in all its glaring color, and some had the dress and manner of bored bankers." They assembled to present photostat copies of the letter written by Jefferson one hundred and forty years ago to Chief Standing Buffalo, their tribal head, as their contribution to "the Papers of Thomas Jefferson," a ten-year literary project now under way at Princeton. Chief White Horse made a speech. He was "proud that the Caucasian race has come to make its home here, that its peoples have come to share mother earth with us." He said also—with the war still in mind, no doubt—that "we are proud that we have taken God for our co-pilot."

That is exactly what Jefferson wanted Indians to think when he wrote his letter, although, as will be seen, he brings in also certain political and commercial considerations. "My friends and children, we are descended from the old nations which live on the other side of the great water, but we and our ancestors have been here so long that it appears to us that we are like you of this land. We do not consider ourselves as coming from the old nations on the other side of the great water but as united in family with our Red brothers." We were, according to Jefferson, a special type of immigrant from across the great water because after a semicolon he adds: "the French, the English, the Spaniards have now agreed with us to retire from all the country which you and ourselves hold between Canada and Mexico and never to return to it; remember the words which I say to you now my children, they must never return to it; we have become as numerous as the leaves of the trees and although we are not boasting, we do not fear any nations, we are now your fathers and you do not lose by the change."

This had to be demonstrated so: "that is why I have sent our man, beloved Captain Lewis, one of my family to go up the Mississippi that he may become acquainted with all the Indian nations in the vicinity of that river, that he may help them . . . and advise us in what manner we may be useful to them . . . and when he returns he shall tell us where it is necessary to establish some trading posts [oh oh] that would be convenient to you and what it is necessary to send there; in establishing commerce with you, we do not desire to make any profits; we shall ask you only what each article will cost us, and we shall give you for your furs and your skins all that they will bring us . . . Be assured that you will find an advantage in the changing of your friends."

But even this statement had to be demonstrated, so Jefferson eloquently proceeds: "it is far preferable among neighbors to help one another than to do harm to one another, how much more happy does that not make them . . . if you live in friendship with all human kind you can employ all your time to procure nourishment and clothing for yourselves and your families, your men will not be killed in war . . . your number will increase instead of diminishing ["ten little indians"] and you will live in peace and rest. My children, I have given this Message to all your Red brothers of this side of the Mississippi; they follow it; they increase in number." [". . . and then there were none."]

"My children, I have opened my heart to you, may my words imprint themselves on your heart and may they never be forgotten."

That should have tied it up but you never can tell, so Jefferson makes a final and wholly admirable effort: "If ever lying men or wicked spirits cause clouds to come between us, remember what I have told you . . . Be certain that there are some lying spirits among us. Let us get together as friends and explain to one another the rumors and misunderstandings. The clouds will fade away as the fogs of the morning and the sun of friendship will appear and shine forever beautiful and clear between us."

You would think that after that there could be nothing possibly left to say and, indeed, in that particularly rapturous tone there was nothing left to say. But while on this occasion Jefferson was a "father" writing to his children, he was not unaware that he possessed also a closer, if official, family, that of his cabinet. In the last paragraph of his letter to his "friends and children" he has this delightful sentence: "The Secretary of War will always be ready to speak with you and you will consider all that he shall say to you as if I said it myself . . ."

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Three hundred remaining Otoes gave Thomas Jefferson's letter to be placed among his collected papers; I hope they read it first; they also gave blankets to the white men who came to get the letter; the white men brought them gifts; it was all quite in the old tradition—except perhaps when, as Mr. Berger relates: "Little Woodchuck, a blond-haired Otoe moppet, lumbered inside the ceremonial circle, eagerly retrieving the photographer's flashlight bulbs."

C. G. PAULDING.

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Franz Kafka

The current revival of interest in his work

Anne Fremantle

"I AM an end or a beginning . . . it is a mandate." So Franz Kafka wrote in his diaries, and his contemporaries, his survivors and his successors have all accepted this his own verdict on himself. For example, Franz Werfel wrote of him, "I felt instinctively, that he was not so much a human being as one to whose share had fallen, in a tragic way, too much of that which is beyond nature. Franz Kafka was a messenger from above, a great chosen one."

To be chosen is always tragic, however glorious such a destiny may seem to those not so honored. For it implies a brand, a mark, a differentiation, a denial of the cozy uniformity we all seek with the whole strength of our pre- and our subconscious. Outside the warmth generated by the closeness of the crowd, of hive or herd, the individual is always cold, and forever lonely.

Franz Kafka was born in Prague on July 3, 1883, of well-to-do, middle-class Jewish parents. His father and mother together ran a wholesale business in cheap women's wear: they lived in an apartment near their garment-store. Two younger brothers died in infancy, but Franz was followed by three younger sisters, the oldest born when he was six. His father's people were successful and commercial, his mother's, the Lowys, were "impractical, shy, dreamy and delicate, an early death being not uncommon amongst them," as Kate Flores relates in her excellent biographical note which opens "The Kafka Problem" (New Directions, $5.00). The Lowy's were mostly white-collar workers: one of Franz's maternal uncles (who became a Christian) was a physician.

The Kafkas were German-speaking, and Franz was educated in a German secondary school, "famous for its severity. . . . Franz lived in meek terror of the school authorities, but was a good student in spite of difficulty with mathematics." He began to write in his childhood; whilst at school, he wrote plays for his parents' birthdays, which were acted by his sisters and directed by himself. In 1902 he entered the German University in Prague, and after a taste of chemistry and a sip of German literature, decided to study law, because "actually I was never free to choose a profession; I knew that compared with the main thing (writing) everything else would find me indifferent; the point was to find a profession which would most readily permit me this indifference." Already the compulsion was interior: he would have, eventually, to earn his living, but the compromise sought was between the indifference and the ecstasy which together made up the whole of life. He got his law doctorate in June, 1906, and served "the usual year of practical law-training while attached without salary to a law-court" and then accepted a minor position with an Italian insurance company. He still lived at home, but was now no longer financially dependent on his father. His intensely ambivalent attitude to his father—of admiration for his positive qualities and bitter hatred for his insensitivity and brutality—he only expressed outwardly at the age of thirty-six, in a hundred-page letter, which he gave his mother, but which she wisely returned to him undelivered: it was found by his friend and biographer Max Brod (who was a fellow student at the university) among Kafka's papers after his death, and is published (in part) in "A Franz Kafka Miscellany" (Twice a Year Press, $3.50). It is almost too Freudian to make any other sense: to account for Kafka's genius by his attitude to his father is as unsatisfactory as to call the feathers of a bird its flight.

In 1908 Kafka changed to a better job with a large insurance company administering the workmen's compensation acts of the kingdom of Bohemia. He was a model employee, devotedly conscientious, and retained his job until illness forced his retirement in 1918. His first appearance in print was with a long-short story—always his favorite form—"Description of a Struggle," which was published in 1909. That same year he traveled to Italy to see an experimental airplane flight; his account was published in *Bohemia,* a German-language Prague newspaper. *Bohemia* also published five slight pieces of Kafka's in their subsequent March issue. He used to work from 8 A.M. to 2 P.M. at his office; then he assisted his parents in their store and wrote at night—sometimes all night. He has given a description of writing "The Judgement" (yet another long-short story) between 10 P.M. one night and 6 A.M. the following morning, when he went "palpitating into his sisters' room and read it to them." He relates, too, how he "stretched himself in front of the maid, and said 'I've been writing until now.'"

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Overwork brought headaches and insomnia; to counteract these Kafka took up athletics, and became "an excellent swimmer, rider and oarsman." His friends dubbed him a fresh-air fiend, and he frequented nudist colonies, becoming both a vegetarian and a teetotaller. He even consulted Dr. Rudolph Steiner, whom he debunks in the gentlest and subtlest way in his account of their meeting: Steiner blows his nose repeatedly in a peculiarly unpleasing way, whilst Kafka "tried to show the humility he did not feel by finding some ridiculous place to put his hat." Ludwig Hardt, in "The Kafka Problem," tells how he overheard Kafka, on a visit to the Berlin aquarium, stepping close to one of the tanks, say softly to the fish, "Now I can look into your eyes with a clear conscience."

In 1912 he fell in love with "a wholesome, merry, natural, robust young woman" and became engaged to her. The same year he wrote "The Stoker" which, though originally published separately in 1913 and awarded the Fontana prize in 1915, became the first chapter of his only cheerful novel, "America." In 1912 Kafka wrote "The Metamorphosis," possibly the best of all his long-short stories. It was published by Kurt Wolff in Leipzig in 1916, in Madrid in 1925, in London in 1937, and now is first published here (Vanguard, $2.75) in a most decorative edition, with a dust-jacket by Seon Givens, which has deservedly won substantial acclaim. The translation, by A. E. Lloyd, though adequate, does not quite come up to those by Edwin and Willa Muir (who have translated "The Great Wall of China" [$3.00] and all the volumes published by Schocken). For the Muirs have succeeded in accomplishing for Kafka what Scott-Moncrieff did for Proust; they have given him so completely satisfactory an englishing that nothing is lost except what must be inevitably: the sound of the original. But the shape of Kafka's prose: the long-flowing, unbroken sentences, as well as the short, hard, tight ones; the violence and horror of many of his scenes contrasted with the gentle, simple, almost humble prose of their relating—these are beautifully retained.

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Kafka first fell ill in the spring of 1913 and, significantly, drew up that summer a list of reasons for and against marriage. With his gentle acceptance of himself just as he was, he admitted to Max Brod that perhaps his illness was psychological, offering, as it did, an escape from the necessity of marriage. Yet he remained on and off engaged to Miss F. B. until 1917. By 1914 he had saved 5,000 kroner, enough, he calculated, to live on for two years while writing. He wrote from Denmark, where he was staying with one of his sisters, to his parents in Prague to tell them that he intended to give up his job and live in Munich or Berlin and to work as a journalist. But the war came, and Kafka returned to his office and worked nights on "The Trial," his second novel, during the years 1914-1916. In 1918 he published fourteen short stories, under the title of "The Country Doctor." By this time he was coughing blood, and a catarrh of the lung had been diagnosed, yet he was able to rent a room outside his home where he could work quietly.

From 1918 until his death he lived, Kate Flores says, "in sanatoria on a small pension, refusing any assistance from his parents." He was briefly engaged again in 1919, to another girl, and in 1920 "there was a short-lived romance at Merau, Austria." It was not until his last summer, when he was staying with one of his sisters at a resort on the Baltic sea, that he met Dora Dyment, the one girl with whom he was to find happiness. She was from a Polish Chassidic family, and when Kafka attended Chassidic rites with Brod, he said, "looking at it closely was like observing a wild African tribe. Crude superstition." Yet, after settling "in a suburb of Berlin with Dora" (they began living together almost at once, though she was nineteen and Kafka was forty) he was "blissfully happy and . . . in the most idyllic circumstances" according to Kate Flores. Kafka then wished to marry Dora, but her father's rabbi forbade it. The terrible privations caused by the inflation and the very severe winter of 1923 increased Kafka's illness, and he and Dora suffered both from cold and hunger. In the spring of 1924 Max Brod insisted on bringing them to Kafka's family in Prague; from thence he went by car to Vienna where, although clearly dying, he was shuttled about from one clinic to another, until at last a pleasant room with a view was found for him at Klosterneuburg. There Kafka could see the Alps from his bed. He spent his last weeks correcting the proofs of "The Hunger-Artist," a collection of four stories which appeared shortly after his death on June 3, 1924. He had told Max Brod, in writing, that he wished "everything he left behind him, printed or in manuscript, to the last page, burnt unread," but, instead, Max Brod gleaned everything he could find of Kafka's and was so successful a scavenger that the Schocken Verlag was able to publish six volumes of Kafka's collected works between 1935-1937.

These are now all to be produced in New York by Schocken Books, and the first volume is "The Great Wall of China," which includes also three other long-short stories, "The Investigations of a Dog," "The Burrow" and "The Giant Mole," as well as "The Hunter Gracchus" and fourteen shorter tales, Kafka's Aphorisms (modeled, in form, on Pascal's "Pensées," but nearer Lao Tze in feeling). The collection is preceded by an introduction by Edwin Muir, and is followed by exeget-

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ical notes by Phillip Rahv, the editor of the *Partisan Review,* in which many of Kafka's stories first appeared in English, and which also published Hannah Arendt's profound study of Kafka, written for the twentieth anniversary of his death.

There could be no better first Kafka reader than this first volume from the Schocken Press: for here is the whole Kafka: the simple, clear language, "like everyday speech purified of slang and negligence," as Hannah Arendt has said; and the story-telling power, so miraculous that, reading, one gobbles each line with an "and then? what then?" and, finally, the astounding truth, for to Kafka "only those things were real whose strength is not impaired but confirmed by thinking," and he compels his reader to believe because he has himself experienced and experimented everything of which he writes: bucket-rider he is, dog he is, cockroach he is, and all this is folly to the world. As Klaus Mann writes of him, "his supreme ambition is to describe the dismay and ecstasy of his inward adventures with as much realism as Flaubert described Madame Bovary. In "The Burrow," for example, Kafka tells of a creature that has spent its whole life making an inconceivably complex labyrinth of underground sandy passages, whose core is the Castle Keep, an inner fortress where it stores its food. This it has surrounded with a complicated multitude of tunnels and over fifty rooms, in which it itself sometimes gets lost. There is but one exit, a movable layer of moss: the big hole that can be seen leads nowhere, is but a ruse. The burrow was not built simply out of fear, yet the occupant is perpetually afraid; even in its deep hibernating sleep it sometimes starts up and "listens, listens into the silence which reigns here unchanged, day and night."

It has made the whole elaborate structure of the burrow with its forehead which it ran "thousands upon thousands of times against the ground" for only tool, "and I was glad when the blood came, for that was a proof that the walls were beginning to harden, and in that way, as everybody must admit, I richly paid for my Castle Keep." But one day the burrower hears a whistling, and gone is his peace; no enemy appears, the noise grows no louder, but does not cease: was there ever an enemy? from whom the flight? against whom the precautions? whence the sound? The writing is so clear that the nerves can be seen as in an arm laid bare: the story is adequate in itself; yet there are any number of explanations. The Burrow is the self-created deception in which Kafka, hating his father and afraid of him, rejects the daylight reality he represents. Or the Burrow is the cocoon of darkness in which the sinner seeks to hide from God: and the whistling is the Ever Presence laughing at the pathetic failure of his attempts; at the unreal safety he tries to construct apart from redemptive Grace; or the Burrow is the Jewish ghetto, created by the inferiority complex and loneliness of the race: its rejection of the upper world that first rejected it; *und so weiter* and so ad infinitum.

And there are as many—and more—explanations and elucidations of every page Kafka ever wrote: of every story, as of the three novels. And Kafka would have willed it so: for he was a Cabbala and a Bible student: for him, the story of Abraham and Isaac had more meaning than he ever could have given any of his own. Yet none of the elucidations ever approximate for an instant Kafka's own vision: for the view of the artist, like that of the prophet, is distinguished by its universality; it is whole, and because whole, unique, and therefore always, to a greater or a lesser extent, totally incommunicable. But only *totally*: just because it is universal, we can each and all of us receive in part and understand in part.

"The Kafka Problem" is an attempted understanding divided into forty parts. It is excellent, both because of the enormous diversity of the writers—who range from W. H. Auden and Max Lerner to Denis Saurat and Albert Camus, and included a whole Noah's Ark of names—and because no one of the forty is in any way repetitive or redundant: each brings to the appreciation of Kafka a new light, a fresh understanding, or lights some obscurity from a new angle. No single essay is superfluous or superficial, yet for all their variety, the common reader goes from them back with new delight to Kafka himself, certain that, humble and stupid though he may be, he can himself find new pleasures in Kafka, through whom, as Franz Werfel wrote, "all eternity pleads for fulfillment." The exhaustive bibliography by Angel Flores contains the names of 146 authors who have published studies or monographs on Kafka; and most of these have written more than one.

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This bibliography (and the four books treated here—all new this fall) are but a part of the great and growing spate of writings about Kafka, but symptoms of the continually increasing interest in him shown by the public. It is a pity that room was not made in "The Kafka Problem" for a reprinting of two of the best essays on Kafka: that of Denis de Rougemont's in his "Les Personnes du Drame," which analyzes Kafka from a specifically Christian angle, and Hannah Arendt's study of Kafka specifically from the Jewish angle in her "The Jew as Pariah." Only de Rougemont has analyzed that sense of the divine transcendance which he so truly says "was almost physical" in Kafka; and only Dr. Arendt has seen

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him as typical of the Jew, in the same sense that Heine was. For her his problem is the eternal Israelite, one "of becoming indistinguishable as soon as possible"; he is the little man who wants to have, as his right, not as charity, a home, a position, real work to do, to become a member of the community. Egon Vietta makes a good point (taking as his text Kafka's statement, "there is only a spiritual world; what we call the physical world is the evil in the spiritual one, and what we call evil, is only a necessary moment in our endless development") when he declares that only he can understand Kafka who has accepted the "fundamental revolution," the fact that, as Kafka put it, "the decisive moment in human development is a continuous one . . . for nothing has happened yet."

There are studies of all the three novels in "The Kafka Problem." Rudolf Vasata discusses Kafka's debt to Dickens in "America"—the tale of the boy stoker, exiled because he had been seduced, who finds, ultimately, happiness in a nature-park in the Middle-West. Kafka himself had said he wanted it to be "a Dickens novel, enriched by the sharper light which I took from modern times, and by the pallid one I have found in my own interior." Alberto Spaini too briefly reviews "The Trial," the most complete of Kafka's books. As Edwin Muir says in an essay included in "A Franz Kafka Miscellany": "In 'The Castle' and 'The Trial' there is hardly a religious question which is not touched."

The story of "The Trial" is that of the arrest of Joseph K., a bank-clerk apprehended in bed one morning, for no reason, who never learns of what he is accused, is never brought to judgment, and, in the end, gladly and willingly accompanies his two executioners, hurrying them past a possibility of rescue. "Only our concept of time," Kafka wrote, "makes it possible for us to speak of the Day of Judgment by that name; in reality it is a summary court in perpetual session." Mr. Muir points out that Kafka is really less a mystical than a theological writer: "his world is clear in its outline, but endlessly intricate in its ramifications; the source of his humor lies in the incompatibility between the ways of God and the ways of man." "The Castle" is a book about grace, as "The Trial" was about the law; but it is also a deliciously satirical account, by one who had suffered from it from the inside, of the strangling redtape officialdom of the decaying Austro-Hungarian Empire. When K. at last gets to see one of the very minor officials of the Castle to which he had thought himself summoned as land-surveyor, he finds him so stifled with official papers that the only place he himself can stand or sit is on his bed. Kafka's view of the state was indeed Lord Acton's: "it is not fitted onto society like a glove, but rather compresses like a thumbscrew, not growing out of society like its skin, but put on it from without, like a mould into which society is forced to pour itself." "A Franz Kafka Miscellany" includes the final, hitherto unpublished chapters of "The Castle," in which poor K, dying, gets word that he may stay in the village. (This "Miscellany" is a revised and enlarged reprint, having appeared in 1940.)

★

Recently a process has been invented by the French for taking three-dimensional photographs. Visually, these provide something of the same sensation that Kafka's stories give his readers. Nothing is single, everything is solid; there is a structural completeness about them which, to borrow a simile from Aldous Huxley, makes them three-storied and everything else one reads seem like a bungalow. Take the brief parable, "An Old Page," which is included in the "Miscellany." Barbarians, nomads from the north, have filled the square in front of the imperial palace; they do not understand language; whatever they need, they take. "One cannot say they use force. When they reach for something, one steps aside and lets them take everything." Especially they need meat; they take the whole butcher's stock, and when he brings a live ox, they spring on it from all sides, "ripping the pieces from his warm body with their teeth." The emperor is perhaps dimly perceived at one of the windows of his palace gazing at what was happening. "But he does nothing; nothing happens, the imperial palace has attracted the nomads, but it does not know how to drive them away again." Or there is the story of Blumenfeld, an elderly bachelor, who will not get a dog because "there comes a day when one's own age looks at one from the teary eyes of a dog," and is plagued and beset by two little, bouncing balls. There are interesting comparisons to be made between "The Trial" and "The Metamorphosis." Both have the shocked awakening: Gregor Sama, a commercial traveler, finds himself changed into some monstrous kind of vermin—a cockroach. Inside, he is the same gentle, meticulous, rather prissy young fellow: the external transformation, which has made his back hard as armor plate, his belly brown and divided by bowed corrugations, his legs pitiably thin and fluttering, does not affect his mind or his emotions. He disgusts only his family; in complete contrast to Joseph K., whose externals are not changed, despite his arrest, he goes on working at the bank, etc. Gregor starves himself to death to help his family by the removal of his hated presence, reversing Abraham's sacrifice: when the charwoman has disposed of his light, dead carcass, his father takes his wife and daughter for a relieved walk in the spring sunlight. Here, again, the despised cockroach son is the

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misunderstood genius? the despised Jew? the sin-conscious creature in a sin-denying world? the murderous Oedipus-complexed son? The truth is anyone's guess: one thing is however certain, that not only the page must be turned upside-down to find the right answer, but the heart too.

In spite of Max Brod's attempt to build his friend up as a brash and healthy young Zionist, Kafka gives, to most of his readers, an impression of impenetrable gloom. In his eager recognition of evil, he identifies always himself with it: we do not need to be told that "The Castle" was originally written in the first person. For Kafka assumes entire responsibility for everything he wrote: Joseph K. of the Trial, as K. of the Castle, are entirely free, and wholly guilty. Father-complex, sexual inadequacy, persecuted race, fatal illness, the aloneness of the artist—Kafka admits and accepts all these imputations, for all are implied in the terrible, inevitable, inescapable relationship of creature to Creator. And Kafka wholly submits to that being the only equation given: others may be surmised, implied, but the vision of none other is attainable by the human being. What glimpses a man may get of God through key-holes—as K sees Klamm in "The Castle" (notice that their relationship is implied by the identity of initial) or as Joseph K sees the waving figure from the upper window during his execution in "The Trial," are untranslatable by us and incomprehensible in our present state of consciousness. For the paradox is, as W. H. Auden points out, that "K's" only guarantee that he is following the true way is that he fails to get anywhere. If he succeeded in getting his way, it would be proof that he had failed." Therefore, Kafka concludes, "a first sign of nascent knowledge is the desire for death . . . one prays to be conducted from the old cell that one hates into a new one that one has yet to hate. There is in this a vestige of faith that during the change the Master may chance to walk along the corridor, contemplate the prisoners and say, "You must not lock up this one again, he is to come to Me."

Peter and Women

Fragment from an unpublished manuscript

Dorothy Day

THERE HAS BEEN a faithful friend of Peter whom I would like to write about, Lillian Weiss, who has been a devoted follower of his since our paper first was published back in 1933. She is a convert from Judaism who earns her living by cooking and housework. Out of her wages, she has bought Peter eye-glasses, clothes, shoes, suits—and because she has always been poor too, her gifts have come from rummage sales and second-hand shops.

She is one of those I think of with respect for her poverty, her hardships, and her life of hard work.

Here is part of a letter she wrote once to Peter. It was after she had known him for three years that she ventured to speak of herself:

"May I border on the personal for a few minutes, hoping I will not prove a bore, to state only one incident of God's protection? As a child of not quite fifteen, a speaker at a Protestant mission I went to, advised us all to own a New Testament, which I had the fortune to purchase soon after in pin type and small size for a few cents at a second-hand book store. I read the accounts of the sacred passion of Christ in the different gospels, alone, at the top of a hill in Central Park at 106th Street, and felt keenly for the suffering of Christ in my Gospel meditations, and concealed the small-size Testament in my stocking when home, and at night under my pillow on the black leather couch in the kitchen where I slept.

"For Labor Day I had an appointment with a girl chum Fanny but at daybreak my father who chanced into the kitchen, found my Testament on the floor beside me, and at once aroused my mother with the find. She awoke me and ordered me out of her house at once, forbidding me to comb or wash, told me not to go near my sister, and she sent me forth into the early break of day saying, 'You are easily fooled, you'll land into the gutter anyway some day, you might as well go now.'

"I walked from 110th Street to Bronx Park and had a capital of eight cents. I purchased a morning paper for two, but could not qualify to answer any of the ads, and I had nothing to eat since the day before. It was late in the afternoon when I decided to spend my nickel to get the advice of my girl chum. I got off at 116th Street and paused to try to help a woman seated on the steps of a private house to her feet. She was intoxicated and some men took her away. A middle aged man engaged me in conversation,

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'Your eyes are all red; what were you crying about, you're too nice to bother with drunken people.'

"I told him I had been crying because I had no success all day looking for work. He wrote a name on a slip of paper and the address and told me to go right over as his wife needed a companion, but he could not go with me. The job was so easy, he said, and he made me promise I would stop for nothing but go at once, and he shook my hand and then as I skipped along only God took care of me. A woman ran after me, calling 'little girl' a few times until I turned around. 'What did that man say to you?' 'He is sending me to a position.' 'Well, if you go to that position, you'll never see the light of day again. I was sitting at the parlor window with my mother watching you and I said, the devil is in that man, and I wonder what he is saying to that little girl, and I was glad when he went in the opposite direction. Mother said, Don't interfere, but I threw my baby in my mother's lap—see, there she is holding my baby, and I flew out after you.'

"Yes, I have much to thank God for."

★

Peter's idea of a valiant woman, as is that of the Church, is the picture of the holy woman, portrayed in the thirty-first Book of Proverbs:

Who shall find a valiant woman?
Far and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her.
The heart of her husband trusteth in her;
And he shall have no need of spoils.
She will render him good and not evil
All the days of her life.
She hath sought wool and flax,
And hath wrought by the counsel of her hands.
She is like the merchant's ship;
She bringeth her bread from afar,
And she has risen in the night, and given a prey to her household,
And victuals to her maidens.
She hath considered a field and bought it
With the fruit of her hand she hath planted a vineyard.

She hath girded her loins with strength
And hath strengthened her arm
She hath tasted and seen that her traffic is good.
Her lamp shall not be put out by night.
She hath put out her hand to strong things;
And her fingers hath taken hold of its spindle.

She hath opened her hands to the needy
And stretched out her hands to the poor.
She shall not fear for her house in the cold of snow;
For her domestics are clothed with double garments.
She hath made for herself clothing of tapestry;
Fine linen and purple is her covering.
Her husband is honorable in the gates,
When he sitteth among the senators of the land.
She made fine linen and sold it, and delivered a girdle to the Canaanite.
Strength and beauty are her clothing
And she shall laugh in the latter day.

She hath opened her mouth to wisdom;
And the law of clemency is on her tongue.
She hath looked well to the paths of her house,
And hath not eaten her bread idle.
Her children rose up and called her blessed.
Her husband, and he praiseth her.

Many daughters have gathered together riches;
But thou has surpassed them all.
Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain;
The woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands;
And let her works praise her in the gates.

This of course is the picture of a queen, sung by her son Lemuel, but Peter would apply it to a woman in the slums, to a peasant woman on the land.

The poem depicts Peter's vision of a philosophy of labor, of love and joy in work, a sense of the beauty of work. It clearly emphasizes the sense of personal responsibility, the practice of the Works of Mercy, the care for others around her, the selflessness of the mother of a household.

In discussing women Peter always gets back to his thesis that people in the cities are cut off from the sources of life by the urban cultural pattern.

All great civilizations, he points out, have been based on a sound agriculture. The cities of the past have been comparatively small, and represent the flowering of the culture of the countryside.

"Woman is matter, man is spirit," Peter said one time, and none of us understood him.

But he was thinking of woman and her nature which is so close to the sources of life, most completely herself when she is caring for growing things, providing for them, feeding them, clothing them. It is not an empty phrase—"Mother Earth," fecund, warm, rich, constant and silent.

Meditating on these things, one begins to understand what Peter means when he says "woman is matter." Unless she uses her body to produce and her hands to serve her young, she is unfulfilled, undeveloped, stunted and thwarted.

The valiant woman was strong—she put her hand to strong things. She bore burdens, she worked late, "she hath risen in the night," "her lamp shall not be put out." Yet always strong, healthy—"she hath strengthened her arm, she hath tasted and seen that her traffic is good."

The peculiar lack of balance in our present-

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day living is epitomized for Peter by the fact that the rich, who have earned their money by factories, value only the "handmade."

"You too can be rich," cries Peter, "you too can put your hands to the crafts, furnish homes, weave and spin, bake bread. Then you will value what you have produced. Then you will put *yourself* into it. Then you will have given yourself. Then you will begin to understand the sacramentality of life. You will understand the sacramental principle, you will begin to see God in all things. You will look upon what God has made, and find it good. You will look at things as God looks at them. You will begin to have the mentality of sons of God, daughters of God."

★

In the ten years we have been exercising personal responsibility and taking in the homeless in New York, there have been many women coming to us, and one of the things that always astounded me about them was that they represented to a fearful degree, the ravages of our industrial life. Of course we got the worst of cases, to use a horrid word. We got girls who had been factory workers, chambermaids, restaurant and office workers, girls who had been working in industry from their earliest childhood, who had come from bad homes of the grossest materialism, the kind of materialism which had no respect for the material of life. They did not know how to cook, nor sew, and at the best they were able, painfully, to do a little cleaning. They certainly had little joy in their work. It was all drudgery to them. They suffered from many ailments, from bad food, from worry, from insufficient sleep. They suffered from fear.

Beatrice provided for us, I always thought, an extreme example of the rootless woman. She and her sister had come from Ireland just before the depression; when her sister got work as a traveling saleswoman, Beatrice found work as a chambermaid. Then during the depression she found nothing, or at least nothing she wanted to do, or could do. I do not see how she could have done housework myself, because once when she was doing some cleaning she put water on the stove to heat in a wooden bucket. Another time she was given a very good dress, a woolen suit from Peck and Peck, which one of our friends had sent in, and the next week I found Beatrice using the skirt of it for a mop cloth. Whether she did this deliberately to show her contempt for the charity of the rich, I do not know. She was a beautiful young thing with a queenly and scornful air.

I used to worry about her a good deal because she was so beautiful and so reckless. When she could not sleep at night she used to get up at two o'clock in the morning and walk across Manhattan bridge. She was a creature of impulse and energy and became very impatient with those on the farm who sat and talked of building houses and never got anywhere with it.

"If you want to build, why don't you start? Why don't you dig? I could start to build a house this morning."

Everyone laughed at her, but after breakfast she went out, found tools for herself, and started digging. She picked a spot at random, between the main house and the chicken coop, well within the sight of all, and spent the entire morning digging with pickax and spade and by noon a sizable hole was done.

She left off at noon, and aside from the comments, "Did you see what that crazy Beatrice was doing all morning?" there was no other comment on her labor. Except perhaps to criticize the spot chosen for a house. Did she have a point in this strange display of energy? If so it was quite lost on the young men who sat around talking about building.

She was a literal creature, and once one of the men who had come to New York from the Boston house of hospitality, mentioned that there was a violin in the Boston house, which she could have if she wished. She left the lunch table in New York and was not seen for a few days. When she walked in not many nights after, she reported, "there is no violin up there," and sat down to eat. She had hitch-hiked to Boston, with not a cent of money in her pocket, made her inquiry and hitch-hiked back again.

She had spent several years with us, trying to be useful by mopping floors and painting when she could lay her hands on the paint. Whenever anyone was in the way of her painting and would not move, she went right on painting right over their shoes.

Then suddenly her sister showed up at the house and insisted on sending Beatrice back to Ireland. Every now and then we heard from her. She missed the excitement, she wrote, of Mott Street. (A good deal of that excitement she made.) Since the war there has been silence.

Beatrice is just one of many women we have had to deal with. There have been feeble-minded women—a woman who sat in her room with a towel tied about her nose with the plaint that there was poison gas in the room. There have been women addicted to drink. There have been women of all nations, Japanese, Chinese, Lithuanian, Russian, Polish, German, Italian, Jews, English, Irish, colored women. There have been working women and intellectual women, but when I try to find a valiant woman amongst them, I search in vain.

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As I write, thinking back into the past, I do remember such a woman—I met her years ago

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on the island of Capri, just outside the village of Anacapri. She was the wife of the mayor of the little town, a Norwegian, I believe, and she was a woman of culture and gentleness and beauty. She could play the piano and the harp. The shelves of her library were covered with the books she had read. Her walls were hung with tapestries, her furniture upholstered with what she had made. She was a wood carver, she could spin and weave. She made her wine, she dried her fruits, she salted down the anchovies her husband's fishermen brought in. She managed her large household and ministered to the poor.

And there are valiant women, and the makings of valiant women with us here in the United States. These are women with an integrated outlook on life, who correlate the material and the spiritual, who understand what Peter is talking about when he discourses on "the soul of woman."

Human Guinea Pigs

By FRANÇOIS MAURIAC

IN THE enormous mass of literature inspired by the world's horror at the revelations of the nazi prison camps, the slender Swiss volume, "Human Guinea Pigs," strikes a special note. It is not an indictment, it is the testimony of witnesses. The cries of the victims are not heard in this book, nor is any spirit of vengeance expressed. The authors, Doctors Menkès, Herrmann and Miège, are of Swiss nationality, and we all know that Switzerland has never been neutral to crime. But these men were not attacked by the nazis in their own flesh or that of their loved ones or compatriots. They can speak of Germany dispassionately. It is that which makes their evidence overwhelming.

However, to my mind, the principal value of their book is that in it we have the voice of scientists, judging other scientists. They have put aside all the other aspects of Nazi Germany's abominable assault against the body and soul of humanity and analyzed the strangest and most bewildering one: the fact that doctors, surgeons, professors of high standing, fathers of families who loved their wives, their children and their pupils, could become so imbued, so devoured from within by a vile doctrine, that, without effort, and as if it were the most natural thing in the world, they treated human beings as if they were guinea pigs, frogs or rats.

It is understandable that the nazis' systematic contempt for humanity should have engendered sadism and criminality in ignorant young brutes. But the German doctors discussed here were middle-aged officials and professional men. What had happened to them?

This brings up another question: could doctors capable of such acts have been found among the medical men of any other country? True, we know today that savagery is the most widely shared thing in this world: the police of one country is like that of another and the French Gestapo was as bad as the German.

We know that common criminals were often entrusted with carrying out the abominations conceived by the nazis. But what baffles understanding is to find the same compliance in scientists and doctors, minds dedicated to thought and reflection, whose special vocation it is to alleviate the sufferings of their fellow-men and heal them. This is a German mystery.

Yes, I use the word "mystery" advisedly. Doctors Menkès, Herrman and Miège have drawn our attention to a strange fact which, before their investigation, does not seem to have been sufficiently emphasized. Many of the monstrous experiments perpetrated upon Frenchmen, Poles, Gypsies and Jews were, from the scientific point of view, absolutely without value; most of them proved nothing that was not already known and led nowhere. At best, they were purely empirical and not based upon any scientific hypothesis. In almost all cases, the scientific trappings used were only a coarse camouflage which fooled nobody and about which those who used them certainly had no illusions.

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One has the impression in reading this book that these men of the laboratory were appeasing a special hatred, that they were pursuing and wished to find and destroy, after they had explored it, the human soul—in which they professed not to believe. One detail struck me in the testimony of these three Swiss doctors: certain experimenters preferred Catholic priests or Protestant ministers for their unspeakable experiments. In this, there is the sign of an invisible power. No doubt, these German scientists had sold their souls to nazism; they were only the instruments of organized crime; they had agreed to enter that monstrous system in which one chosen and glorified race disposed of the bodies of men, after it had turned them into wretched hunted animals. Beyond good and evil, they thought they were serving a new truth, a new gospel. But they were only passively obeying their masters. In the choice of priests for certain experiments, it was hatred—supernatural hatred—that they sought to satisfy.

They must have believed that they were the protagonists of the greatest spiritual revolution this planet had ever seen; they must have believed that they were helping to overthrow all the old values. But, having lost the game, it is by the old values that they will be judged, by that inalienable moral law which their own Kant taught them was within us, as a testimony of the living God, the God they scoffed at, and Who, even now, in this life, demands a reckoning for the blood of His martyrs.

Poems on Postcards

Song of the Small-Nations Delegate

I'm doing the best that I'm able
But procedural trouble retards:—
The Big Four keep putting the table
On top of the cards.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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Books to Give

The Editors

BIOGRAPHIES have many advantages as Christmas presents. Even in their present popularized versions, there is usually something solid about them, a certain substantiality which will endure long after the widely publicized fiction of the moment has been hurried through and forgotten. And it must not be overlooked that it is mighty handy to be able to correlate so neatly with a friend's tastes and interests by giving him an account of the sort of man or woman whose life career would most interest him.

This year, for instance, if you have in mind someone with a literary bent, there is a normally wide range of choice. One of the most distinguished volumes—and physically one of the heaviest—is "Leo Tolstoy," by Ernest J. Simmons (Little, $5.00). Somewhat less formidable, and properly so, for it deals with a man of far lesser stature, is Hesketh Pearson's "Oscar Wilde" (Harper, $3.75). For the artistically inclined there is "Burning Lights," by Bella Chagall (Schocken, $3.00). Illustrated with 36 typical black and white drawings by her husband, Marc Chagall, this is a charming account—in the form of a series of short sketches—of various aspects of her life in a Russian-Jewish family with emphasis on spiritual values and the ways of life of a small Russian town. For those willing to descend from the book-making level to the periodical field there is Ellery Sedgwick's "The Happy Profession" (Little, $3.50), an informal professional autobiography which unhappily leaves out much of his private life and most intense personal feelings.

In the field of American history there are a number of notable current titles. One of the most understanding and significant is "Brandeis: A Free Man's Life," by Alpheus Thomas Mason (Viking, $5.00). Of the two most important family chronicles, "The Randolphs," by H. J. Eckenrode (Bobbs, $3.50) and "The Lowells and Their Seven Worlds," by Ferris Greenslet (Houghton, $4.00), the biography dealing with the Virginians is much snappier than the story of the New Englanders. And that may not be entirely ascribed to the biographers either. For those who wish a completely sympathetic picture of our late President as a man, there is "The Roosevelt I Knew," by Frances Perkins (Viking, $3.75). There are two excellent biographies dealing with notable American figures of the past century: "Alexander H. Stephens," by Rudolph von Abele (Knopf, $4.00), and "Zachary Taylor," by Brainerd Dyer (Louisiana State University, $4.00). "Daniel Coit Gilman," by Abraham Flexner (Harcourt, $2.00), is a brief account of the career of an outstanding leader in the formation of the American university as we now know it. And for those who are so interested in American history that they would take note of its leading chroniclers there is "Hubert Howe Bancroft," by John W. Caughey (University of California, $5.00). For those who want to understand how the British Empire was built up—and are willing to recognize that many of its evils came about rather more in the course of things than from conscious evil intent—there is one of the most fascinating and competent biographies of the season, "Raffles of Singapore," by Emily Hahn (Doubleday, $3.00).

There are several new lives of Saints and other holy men which are particularly worth listing. Most distinguished as far as writing goes is Evelyn Waugh's "Edmund Campion" (Little, $2.75), which was brought out in this country this fall for the first time. Henri Ghéon's "Saint Martin of Tours" (Sheed, $2.75) is a lively account of a fourth century saint whose miracles make even more of an impression than the beautiful account of the gift to the beggar of his cloak (and the Indian Summer or Saint Martin's Summer which resulted). "Gailhac of Beziers," Helene Magaret (Longmans, $3.50), deals with an heroic nineteenth century French figure. Whereas M. Ghéon's account of Saint Martin derives considerable charm from the antiquity of its sources, Miss Magaret's story gains considerable punch from her realistic portrayal of the modern physical and moral evils with which Father Gailhac battled so bravely. "The Abbé Edgeworth," by M. V. Woodgate (Longmans, $2.50), tells of an Irish priest in the days of the French Revolution—he became confessor to the sister of Louis XVI and secret vicar general of Paris during the Terror.

This season has not been especially notable for its autobiographies, but there are two dealing with prominent American families which manifest considerable charm: "From the Top of the Stairs," by Gretchen Finletter (Little, $2.50) and "My Boyhood in a Parsonage," by Thomas W. Lamont (Harper, $2.50). "Journal from My Cell," by Roland de Pury (Harper, $1.50), is a powerful account of a minister's experiences as a nazi prisoner, his sympathetic relations with an Oblate father, his subsequent isolation and the joys of his final deliverance. "And Hearing Not," by Earnest Elmo Calkins (Scribner's, $3.75), with its engaging account of advertising in the early days, should be an ideal gift for many a business man.

Art and Music

Each year there are the books on composers and the books on painters; the books on painters always have wonderful illustrations but the books on musicians have to be just plain prose. Too often however the prose is not plain; too often it reads like the program notes at

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concerts with all that business about the theme appearing in the horns, taken up by the violins, remembered faintly by a flute and that is all right except that if you do not remember the theme it all amounts to a lot of words. But this year there is a book on Handel and one on Haydn and both give a great deal of attention to the society in which these composers worked; both are interesting to people who go to concerts and who like to know how the men who wrote the classics lived. "Handel," by Herbert Weinstock (Knopf, $5.00). "Haydn," by Karl Geiringer (Norton, $5.00). For those who like to sing at home and who can read simple one-line tunes there is the delightful collection called "Rounds and Rounds," edited by Mary C. Taylor and pleasantly illustrated. (Sloane, $3.00). Here are one hundred and twelve rounds (three blind mice) from the earliest to contemporaries. The great bulk of them are seventeenth and eighteenth century and a mildly talented family could have a great deal of fun with them all.

As for the painters there is a fine volume of reproductions of the work of Toulouse-Lautrec (Hyperion, Crown, $6.50) and one of Van Gogh, "Vincent Van Gogh," by Edward Alden Jewell (Hyperion and Duell, $5.50). Both these painters have recently been popularized in drug stores but here the reproductions are better and there is a useful critical apparatus and they are beautiful books to have, to keep or to give. For those who prefer to think irrevocably in terms of the old masters there is an excellent "Giovanni Bellini," by Philip Hendy and Ludwig Goldscheider (Phaedon. Oxford, $6.50). And there is a very fine volume entitled "The Christmas Story," by Margit Varga (Dodd, $5.00) which is a book of paintings by the great renaissance masters surrounded by some rather fancy typography in which the "story" is told. The choice of paintings is remarkably good and the reproductions excellent.

But the picture book of the year for us is without hesitation the "Lost Treasures of Europe," a pictorial record edited by Henry LaFarge (Pantheon, $5.00). This is the first attempt to list in photographs the most important masterpieces in architecture and painting that were lost to the world during the war in Europe. There are a certain number of pictures of what was left in ruins, just enough to remind us that the bombs did fall, just enough to remind us while we look at the other photographs of wonderful buildings and paintings that we are no longer looking at things civilization possesses but at things civilization has lost. The section on Russia will come as a useful surprise to many readers. You may think this is a sour present to give anyone at Christmas but Palestine was not such a cheerful place either and it is in a desperate world that this Christmas will be announced.

History et cetera

History books this year are still hard to abstract from not very giftlike tomes about "our current horrible problems," and there are still numerous and some rather good works coming out about the war itself which we will not undertake to classify. The most sure war history books probably are the official SHAEF report by General Eisen-

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FOR CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Altman's large and varied collection of books includes both fiction and non-fiction for readers of all ages. There are finely bound sets and single volumes of the classics as well as current books. The religious books include Bibles, missals, prayer-books, and books for spiritual reading.

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hower, and the first volume of the Army historical section story of Omaha Beach. We will just let it go at that.

Getting back a long way, an unlikely named author called Jack Finegan offers an excellent book of Biblical archaeology called "Light from the Ancient Past" (Princeton University, $5.00). There is another book about the area and mostly about the ancient period by Nelson Glueck called "The River Jordan" (Westminster, $3.50), which is not strictly history but contains much interesting historical musing centered on the Holy Land, and is written if not as suavely as J. B. Morton, still in a felicitous and learned fashion.

For the most de luxe private or institutional trade Scribners offers the centenary edition of the "Dictionary of American Biography" ($115.00). That firm also has on Christmas book shelves the new third volume of the "Album of American History" ($7.50). Another colorful album book on American history is "As We Were," by Bellamy Partridge and Otto Bettmann (Whittlesey, $4.50).

Three series of books which overlap the fields of American history and biography and contemporary problems and just plain antiquarian color are the American Lake Series published by Bobbs Merrill (Ponchartrain, for instance, $3.50, and Champlain and Lake George, $3.50), and the Rivers of America Series published by Rinehart for $3.00, and the American Folkways Series of Duell, Sloan & Pearce (various prices). Some of the individual volumes in these three series express in part rather annoying as well as controversial viewpoints of the authors (for instance, Carey McWilliams's attack on the Franciscan missionaries in his otherwise excellent "Southern California Country"—Duell, $3.75). But they are nearly all well done and good reading.

A few specially Catholic items not to forget are the sixth volume of "The History of the Catholic Church: Period of the Ancient Régime," by Fernand Mourret, S.S., translated by Newton Thompson (Herder, $4.00); John Tracy Ellis's "Formative Years of the Catholic University of America" (American Catholic Historical Association, $3.00), written in good style and giving important material even though it does not pretend to treat the all-around problem of educating American Catholics; "Australia, The Catholic Chapter," by James G. Murtagh (Sheed, $3.00), an excellent work about what is described in the title.

Carlton J. H. Hayes's "Wartime Mission to Spain" (Macmillan, $3.00) accumulates acclaim. "The Congress of Vienna," by Harold Nicolson (Harcourt, $4.00), is particularly interesting while the UN attempts to make a new peace. "Iran," a nation in and out of the news, is treated in an interesting history by William S. Haas (Columbia University, $3.50). In "The Great Retreat," by Nicholas S. Timasheff (Dutton, $5.00), an excellent Catholic scholar presents the recent history and an interpretation of Russia. Chiang Kai-shek speaks for himself in "The Collected Wartime Messages of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, 1937-1945" (2 vols., John Day, $7.50).

American exploration is colorfully presented by Jeannette Mirsky in "The Westward Crossings" (Knopf, $4.00). The story told of Balboa is particularly good; the exploration of Mackenzie is only a little less interesting; the author seems to strain a bit and become somewhat less sound in relating the story and the somewhat controverial "significance" of Lewis and Clark. In the "Economic Mind in American Civilization," by Joseph Dorfman (Viking, $7.50), a useful encyclopedic rather than a critical or organic history is offered. A not too exemplary phase of American economic history forms the basis of Wayne Andrew's "Battle for Chicago" (Harcourt, $3.75), wherein Chicago family fortunes are traced to their colorful and rarely polite births and strapping youths. "The Wilson Era," by Josephus Daniels (2 vols., U. of N. C., $7.50), is a history very much alive through the vitality of the author who participated so importantly in the period. "Lost Men of American History," by Stewart H. Holbrook (Macmillan, $3.50), helps give substance to our past by dealing well with men who made but failed to keep the headlines. The "Selected Writings of John and John Quincy Adams," edited by Adrienne Koch and William Peden (Knopf, $4.50), throws considerable and useful light on the many years when this most eminent father and son combination were influencing and reflecting American life. "Lincoln's War Cabinet," by Burton J. Hendrick (Little, $5.00), is very useful Civil War material. And for those who like their history that way, we suggest looking under the heading of biography.

Current Headaches

With the world in its present sorry state, it is natural for a great many writers to wonder about it in public. Unfortunately such books are often very dull and tend to date very quickly. Their very nature makes them a bit doubtful as Christmas gifts. Yet for some serious-minded friends they may exactly fill the bill. Of course, the central problem occupying our minds today is the problem of the relations between the Russian East and the Atlantic West, and a number of books bearing on this have come off the presses. We list a few for the convenience of those looking for such fodder.

Where Are We Heading? Sumner Welles. Harper. $3.00. Unfortunately Mr. Welles does not write vividly or hold a reader's interest, and this able diplomat has a certain partisanship of his own. It will hurt no one to read his book, maintaining a critical attitude of mind toward it.

I Chose Freedom. Victor Kravchenko. Scribner. $3.50. Useful for disillusioning those who still hope that the Soviet is a paradise. The author, as everyone knows, was a Soviet official.

The Great Globe Itself. William C. Bullitt. Scribner. $2.75. The testimony of a former American ambassador to Moscow who was favorably disposed toward Russia and is now strongly opposed.

Soviet Asia Mission. Henry A. Wallace. Reynal. $3.00. Gives a clear picture of the author's simple-hearted trust in the possibility of a firm friendship between Russia and the rest of the world. Useful for the descriptions of what he saw in this unknown section of the world.

Blueprint for World Conquest. Edited by William Henry Chamberlin. Human Events. $3.50. Complete texts of early documents regarding Communist capture of the globe.

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NEVER BEFORE HAVE
WE HAD SO MANY

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CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

THE NEW TESTAMENT ILLUSTRATED

in Msgr. Knox's translation, with its 30 full color plates, and general beauty, naturally heads the list. It is the best five dollars' worth we ever saw. $5.

THEOLOGY AND SANITY

by F. J. Sheed, contains, the author says, all the theology he knows. If you want a further reason for giving it, he also says "It is impossible to be sane without theology, and very difficult even with it." $3.00

A TESTIMONIAL TO GRACE

by Avery Dulles, shows how one agnostic came home, and maps the path, we hope, for thousands more. $1.50

FRIENDSHIP HOUSE

by Catherine de Hueck, is an account of the founding and growth of one of the greatest movements for racial and social justice in the world. It's amusing too. $2.75

AUSTRALIA: THE CATHOLIC CHAPTER

by James G. Murtagh, shows a century of Catholic Action developing fast and curiously, like the kangaroo: a study of what a few Catholics on a large continent can do, if they put their hearts in it. $3.00

MOSCOW 1979

by Christiane and Erik von Kuhnelt Leddihn, is a new edition of this terrifying novel, good medicine for anyone who can take it without being sick. Graham Greene is all for it. $3.00

ST. CAMILLUS

by C. C. Martindale, S.J., is about how the Red Cross and Medicine first came together, in the Servants of the Sick, founded in 1586 by a scoundrel turned saint. $2.75

RETREAT FOR PRIESTS

by Msgr. Ronald Knox, eighteen meditations, mainly based on Old Testament incidents—*the* gift for the nicest priest you know. $2.50

ST. MARTIN OF TOURS

by Henry Gheon, translated by F. J. Sheed is about (we guess) Gheon's favorite saint, and must be making St. Martin's life in heaven busier than it has been for a long time—you can hardly read the book without beginning to pray to him. $2.75

TALES OF XAVIER

by Bishop Walsh of Maryknoll, is written with a mixture of zest and humor special to the author, and quite enchanting. A safe gift for anyone from fourteen up. $2.50

THE VOICE OF A PRIEST

by Edward Leen, C.S.Sp., is the book the author had just finished working on when he died: it is published with an introduction about the author by his friend Father Kelly. $3.00

CROWN FOR JOANNA

by Sister Mary Jean Dorcy, is about a 13th century Portuguese princess who wouldn't marry and would go into a convent. The author makes it as exciting as any love story of this world, and has illustrated it with her own lovely silhouettes. For high school age girls. $1.50

SONG IN THE SOUTH

by Mary Fabyan Windeatt, is the extraordinarily adventurous story of St. Francis Solano, told for older children. With pictures by Gedge Harmon. $2.00

THE ADVENTURES OF THE REDCROSSE KNIGHT

by Sister Charitina, is the first book of Spenser's *Faery Queen* retold in prose for children from about 8 to 12 with wonderful colored pictures of knights and dragons by Jeanyee Wong. $3.00

If this doesn't settle everybody, write to us for a catalog.

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The Great Challenge. Louis Fischer. Duell. $4.00. Mr. Fischer has certain marked faults, yet he has observed a lot of recent history and his book has value for the record.

Three Worlds. Nicholas S. Timasheff. Bruce. $2.75. An analysis of the three-cornered struggle between communism, fascism and democracy.

Nationalism and Internationalism. Don Luigi Sturzo. Roy. $3.50. An interpretation of the Catholic position on this crucial point.

Several books of real distinction have recently appeared dealing with more limited and local problems. Here are a few of that sort:

Ally Betrayed. David Martin. Prentice. $3.50. An account of the Mihailovitch episode from the point of view of one convinced of that general's merits.

The Shore Dimly Seen. Ellis Gibbs Arnall. Lippincott. $3.00. A book by a Southern liberal Democrat which a great many people will be reading.

The Discovery of India. Jawaharlal Nehru. Day. $5.00. The very fact of Nehru's present position makes this book important.

The French Canadian Outlook. Mason Wade. Viking. $2.00. The best short treatment of this subject yet written.

Tour of Duty. John Dos Passos. Houghton. $3.00. Reflections of a thinking man upon his various tours as a correspondent during and since the war.

For those who are concerned with the even more fundamental problem of man's relation to the planet on which he lives, three books are particularly worth noticing.

The Soil and Health. Sir Albert Howard. Devin. $4.00. As we go to press this important work by one of the most original scientists of our day is not yet available, but the moment it is, it would be a splendid gift for anyone interested in its subject.

The Country Life. Samuel P. Ogden. Barnes. $2.75.

Cities Are Abnormal. Edited by Elmer T. Peterson. Oklahoma. $3.00.

Fiction

The current year—and particularly the last few months—has not been punctuated by the appearance of many novels of unusual interest or force. The most notable as a group are several with a distinctly Catholic flavor. They have been described at greater length in our November 8 issue. They are: "Joy," by Georges Bernanos (Pantheon, $2.75); "Woman of the Pharisees"—François Mauriac (Holt, $2.50); "Yellow Tapers for Paris"—Bruce Marshall (Houghton, $2.50); "For One Sweet Grape"—Kate O'Brien (Doubleday, $2.75).

There are three tales each with his own special brand of charm. "Mistress Masham's Repose," by T. H. White (Putnam, $2.75), is a fantasy for both children and grownups. It is charmingly illustrated, deftly humorous for those who go in for that sort of thing. "Chloe Marr," by A. A. Milne (Dutton, $2.75), has a devastatingly beautiful heroine who for some reason, which is not cleared up, cannot fall in love with any of her most devoted and attractive masculine entourage. "Captain Boycott," by Philip Rooney (Appleton, $2.75), has its touches of blood and thunder but is charmingly historical all the same.

When it comes to the serious side of things there are several rather impressive candidates. "All the King's Men," by Robert Penn Warren (Harcourt, $3.00), exhibits genuine craftsmanship; it deals with decadence in our American South in a powerful and disturbing fashion. Then there is "East River," by Sholem Asch (Putnam, $3.00), a warmly sympathetic study of Jewish family life on New York's congested East Side with important interracial and interreligious overtones. Christopher La Farge's "The Sudden Guest" (Coward, $2.50) is a masterly study of human meanness, selfishness and frustration under the impact of our two most recent New England hurricanes. Rumer Godden's "The River" (Little, $2.00), telling of growing up in India, is definitely on the charm side and Miss Godden is without question one of the most artistic of our present day novelists. "Homeland," by Georges Surdez (Doubleday, $2.75), is an impressive account of a Swiss boyhood and of village life with the Jura in the background. It is as adventuresome as it is authentic.

Religion et cetera

The first religious gift book clearly presenting itself for this Christmas is Ronald A. Knox translation of the New Testament, produced in great style by Sheed and Ward for $5.00. It is from the translation of the Vulgate commissioned by the bishops of England and Wales. Where readings are too obscure or debatable, non-interfering side-page notes indicate alternative readings taken from Greek and other texts. The Gospels and the Acts and the Epistles are presented in paragraph form, with verse numbers included for reference within the paragraphs, but kept from holding up reading by the printer's art. Thirty color reproductions of appropriate and lovely paintings from British and American museums are scattered through the text, and besides this, black and white decorations and chapter heads add to the physical attraction of the work. The good looks and the clear and running quality of the translation give joy in reading. Another Bible book recently published is "A Companion to the Old Testament," by John E. Steinmueller and Kathryn Sullivan, offered by Wagner for $4.50. This book is rather hard-going, especially in the language, but the seriously interested layman will find the 406 pages very full of useful and interesting material—about one-half concerned with the history of the Old Testament Jews.

Sheed and Ward has also brought out a new edition of Cardinal Newman's "Apologia Pro Vita Sua" with an introduction by Maisie Ward ($3.00). More classical still is the volume of "The Epistles of Saint Clement of Rome and Saint Ignatius of Antioch," translated by James A. Kleist, S.J. This is the first volume of a series planned for publication by the Newman Book Shop entitled "Ancient Christian Writers" ($2.50). Still another Christian classic made newly available this year is the "Treatise on Purgatory and The Dialogue," by Saint Catherine of Genoa (Sheed, $2.00). Macmillan has published for $1.50 a good edition of "The Incarnation of the Word of God," by Saint Athanasius. Two works by Saint John Eudes are offered by Kenedy: "The Life

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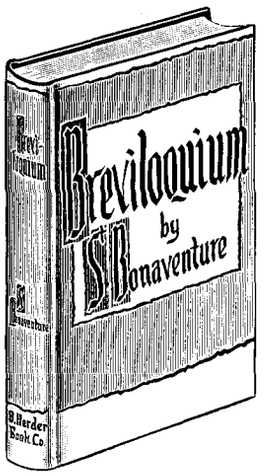

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By

ST. BONAVENTURE

Translated by

Erwin Esser Nemmers, A.M., Mus.M., LL.B.

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Among the most eminent theologians in the history of the Church is St. Bonaventure. He was a contemporary of St. Thomas Aquinas. In fact these two doctors of the Church died the same year. In response to many requests that he set forth his theological teaching in concise form, Bonaventure wrote the BREVILOQUIUM.

Anyone who studies this work or merely reads it cannot help being impressed by its orderly arrangement and preciseness and by the clear thinking that prevailed in that golden age of Scholasticism.

The scope of the BREVILOQUIUM appears from the headings of its seven parts, namely:

I. THE TRINITY OF GOD
II. THE CREATION OF THE WORLD
III. THE CORRUPTION OF SIN
IV. THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD
V. THE GRACE OF THE HOLY GHOST
VI. THE SACRAMENTAL REMEDY
VII. THE FINAL JUDGMENT

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and Kingdom of Jesus" ($3.00), and "The Sacred Heart of Jesus ($2.00). While keeping to certainties we must also mention "The Epistles and Gospels for Sundays and Holy Days," translated by Ronald Knox (Sheed, $2.50).

It is hard to select from among the more contemporary religious works: taste, interest, and what a person has read and thought before tend to determine the appropriateness of the gift. "The Mystical Life," by Pascal P. Parente (Herder, $2.50), is a clearly written, masterful and informative treatise on the mystical life. "The Mysteries of Christianity," by Matthias J. Scheeben (Herder, $7.50), is a monumental work extremely popular in Europe and particularly in Germany. "The Messias," by Joseph Pickl (Herder, $4.00), is considered controversial in parts, but about the most stimulating and significant recent work of Gospel interpretation.

"Whereon to Stand," by John Gilland Brunini (Harper, $3.00), is an excellent book about Catholic believing, with a quality very rarely available for a Christmas gift to Catholic and non-Catholic friends. "Truths Men Live By," by John A. O'Brien (Macmillan, $2.75), is remarkably inclusive, generally good, popular apologetics. "Christianity," by Joseph H. Fichter (Herder, $2.50), is a concise, clear outline of dogmatic theology. The Church in a special place and circumstance is excellently presented in "Under the Red Sun," by Forbes J. Monaghan (McMullen, $2.75), which tells the story of Philippine heroism during the war, especially among the pupils of the Jesuit Ateneo. Father Edward Haggerty's "Guerilla Padre in Mindanao" (Longmans, $2.75), concerns the same Philippine situation. "The Great Religions of the Modern World," edited by Edward J. Jurji (Princeton University, $3.75), has an excellent section on the Catholic Church, and presumably the other religions are presented with similarly intelligent care.

Belles Lettres

J. B. Yeats: Letters to His Son, W. B. Yeats, and Others —1869-1922. Edited with a memoir by Joseph Hone and a Preface by Oliver Elton. Dutton. $4.00. The painter father to his better known poet son; witty and tender, with a lot about the art and theory of poetry.

A Century of the Catholic Essay. Edited by Father Raphael S. Gross. Lippincott. $3.50. Mostly nineteenth century and the best of a pleasant genre which may seem now to us unattainably placid.

The American Scene. Henry James. Foreword by W. Auden. Scribners. $5.00. Still the most perceptive description of our characteristics and decidedly not dated.

Hardy the Novelist. Lord David Cecil. Bobbs. $2.50. An excellent study of this bleak, conscientious writer.

A Man in the Divided Sea. Thomas Merton. New Directions. $2.50. A strong and intense Catholic poet, a modern writer and a Trappist monk.

The Playwright as Thinker. Eric Bentley. Reynal. $3.00. The old question of emotion and thought and whether the theater can stand thought or must live on emotion, studied, interestingly, in the works of great playwrights.

Dickens, Dali and Others. George Orwell. Reynal. $2.00. The author of the "Animal Farm" forsakes the fable form and is at his best as a critic.

Rimbaud. Wallace Fowlie. New Directions. $2.50. The suffering Rimbaud studied in relation to God: rebellion and grace.

The Condemned Playground. Cyril Connolly. Macmillan. $2.75. Collected *Horizon* essays, many of them brilliant, some of them sensible.

Selected Writings of Gertrude Stein. Edited by Carl Van Vechten. 622 pages. Random. $3.50. Since Miss Stein is not going to be forgotten for quite a long time and since some of her work is difficult to procure this volume should be added to the library shelf.

Letters to Kermit from Theodore Roosevelt. Scribners. $3.00. Intimate and healthy comments, advice and flashes of contemporary history. Delightful reading.

Stendhal. Matthew Josephson. Doubleday. $4.00. An exhaustive study of a writer who excites the most fervent admiration in some, leaves others cold or hostile, but who marked a turning point in modern writing.

Hotel Bemelmans. Ludwig Bemelmans. Viking. $3.00. The fantastic life of rich hotels seen, amusingly, by a man who knows them from the waiters' pantry.

The Blue Flower. Best Short Stories of the Romanticists. Edited by Hermann Kesten. Illustrated. Roy. $5.00. The romanticists started us off and we will never get away from them no matter what Zola did or Dreiser did. They may seem quaint when we read them now and entirely nostalgic but that is only because we are ashamed. This is an excellent collection, pleasantly illustrated.

The Noble Voice. Mark Van Doren. Holt. $3.00. A number of the world's greatest poets nobly studied.

Specimens of English Dramatic Criticism: 17th to 20th Centuries. Edited by A. C. Ward. Oxford. $1.10. A small and well presented book of interesting texts.

English Literature in the Earlier 17th Century. Douglas Bush. Oxford. $7.50. A solid, scholarly account covering such men as Jonson, Donne and Milton.

History of Chinese Art. Ludwig Backhofer. Pantheon. $8.50. A remarkable, complete and most revealing account of one of the great sources of world civilization.

Petrarch's Sonnets and Songs. Translated by Anna Maria Armi. Pantheon. $3.50. The English text which follows the Petrarchian form faces the Italian text. The poetry is extraordinarily modern.

Lord Weary's Castle. Robert Lowell. Harcourt. $2.50. As in the case of Thomas Merton's poetry, the reviewers are overcome with a surprise we do not share at seeing profoundly Catholic poetry in contemporary idiom.

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Christmas Gift Suggestions

THE CHILD AND THE EMPEROR

By Prince Hubertus zu Loewenstein. The beautiful legend of the meeting in Rome of young Jesus and mighty Augustus, ruler of the world. It reveals the profound impression made upon Caesar when he recognizes the secret of the Child. **$1.50**

TO THE END OF THE WORLD

By Helen C. White. This glowing novel tells of Michel de la Tour d'Auvergne's attempts to reawaken in the France of his time the spiritual life of the Middle Ages. **$3.00**

THE SHINING TREE

By Lucille Papin Borden. An appealing and inspiring modern Christmas tale. It tells the story of a little lost refugee who is befriended by a newsboy and his friends. **$2.50**

THE BOOK OF SAINTS

Compiled by The Benedictine Monks of St. Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate. Contains accurate biographical details for over 9,000 saints. The only up-to-date dictionary of the Saints of the Catholic Church. **$3.00**

THE SICK CALL RITUAL

By James E. Greenan. Contains in unabridged form all the rites prescribed by the Roman Ritual for the sick and dying. "The finest help for the regular sick call that a priest can find."—*Father Nolan.* **$1.25**

SO FALLS THE ELM TREE

By John L. Bonn. The biography of Mother Ann Valencia, foundress of St. Francis Hospital in Hartford, Connecticut. The dramatic events surrounding the growth of a great institution form the colorful background of this poignant biography. **$2.50**

EXILE IN THE STARS

By James J. Donohue. This book of devotional poetry, lovely and profound is a lyrical interpretation of the creation, the fall, and the prophecy of Redemption, set in the form of the Hours of the Divine Office. **$1.50**

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St. John of the Cross

By Robert Sencourt. A biography of the great Spanish mystic and poet. St. John's extant poetry in Spanish is included. "The great mystic is portrayed amid all the movement and excitement of sixteenth century Spain."—*The Church Times.* *Illus.* **$3.00**

CHRIST OUR BROTHER

By Karl Adam. "He brings our Saviour into our innermost lives. He shows us that Christ *is* our brother. He makes the gospels live as the guide to our modern life."—*Homiletic and Pastoral Review.* **$2.25**

THE LONG ROAD HOME

By John Moody. One of the most prominent Catholic converts of recent years tells of his search for spiritual peace and of his discovery of fulfillment in "The Great Mother Church." **$2.50**

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Miscellaneous

First of all, it might just as well be pointed out that this year's season has added a number of helpful and desirable titles to the various inexpensive reprint series. A visit to your bookseller's should provide lists of these titles, which can serve particularly well as simple reminders of friendship or affection. Especially to be noted are the Viking Press's "Portable" series, now including a Mark Twain. Somewhat less expensive are the Oxord Press's "World Classics" and the numerous "Penguins." While speaking of reprints, we cannot omit the reissue of Hilaire Belloc's "The Servile State" (Holt, $2.50). This is a particularly timely volume, and extraordinary when we remember how long ago it was written. Then there is the very handsome "Complete Poems and Stories of Edgar Allan Poe" edited by Arthur Hobson Quinn and Edward H. O'Neill (Knopf, $10.00). Another welcome volume is "The Best of Don Marquis" with an introduction by Christopher Morley (Doubleday, $3.00). And finally the Oxford University Press has again made available Christopher Hobhouse's thoroughly admirable combination history and guide entitled, simply, "Oxford" ($3.00). The remaining books listed below simply refuse to be shoehorned into any clear categories.

Natural History of Nonsense. Bergen Evans. Knopf. $3.00. An uneven and slightly naïve performance, yet with a certain amount of value.

Driftwood Valley. Theodora C. Stanwell-Fletcher. Little. $4.00. Perfect for lovers of nature pretty much in the raw.

Of Making Many Books. Roger Burlingame. Scribner. $3.75. One of the best histories even written of a publishing house—now commencing its second century.

The Borzoi Book of Ballets. Grace Robert. Knopf. $4.50. Wonderful for those who love the subject.

The Fever Bark Tree. M. L. Durin-Reynals. Doubleday. $2.75. A fascinating account of quinine.

Frontier on the Potomac. Jonathan Daniels. Macmillan. $3.00. An account of personalities in Washington by a man who is himself a strong individualist.

Krazy Kat. George Herriman. Holt. $3.75. No comment needed.

Not by Bread Alone. Vilhjalmur Stefansson. Macmillan. $3.50. The author's latest exposition of his views on meat.

Mexico South. Miguel Covarrubias. Knopf. $7.50. A beautifully illustrated account of traditional Mexican life.

Animal Tales. Edited and Illustrated by Ivan T. Sanderson. Knopf. $5.00. A wonderful gift for those who like this sort of story.

Journeys in Time. Blair Niles. Coward. $4.00. About some American historians.

In Time and Eternity. A Jewish Reader. Edited by Nahum N. Latzer. Schocken. $2.75. A selection of Jewish literature which is both enlightening and charming.

White Caps. Victor Robinson. Lippincott. $3.75. Excellent for any trained nurse.

A Book of Fishes. S. Kip Farrington, Jr. Blakiston. $2.00. Will charm any angler. Fine illustrations by Lynn Bogue Hunt.

Garden Lilies. Alan and Esther Macneil. Oxford. $3.50. A magnificent handbook for amateur or professional gardeners.

The Stage & Screen

Joan of Lorraine

ALL-AMERICA Week on Broadway, with three openings precisely written by three living playwrights, was interesting business indeed, and Maxwell Anderson, the first in line, has supplied a good portion of it. I think it is safe to say that Mr. Anderson has built his best play; the most adult, least easily rhapsodic. On the other hand, it seems to me also true that he has fallen upon a pattern which could support rather more searching thought. As a matter of fact, the pattern is so good, one would like to see everyone's version of it; since the more profound and speculative the thinker at work in such a framework, the more important would be the play. I do not mean to detract from Mr. Anderson's invention and earnestness in this work, but simply to wish he had a more vertical attack. In any case, firmly rejecting any touch of Pirandellian metaphysics, his version of the play-within-a-play idea works out something like this. When the curtain rises, we are confronted by a number of actors and director rehearsing a drama of Joan of Arc. The stage is bare (it is the first run-through) although lighting effects are used, some set pieces are pulled on and off, and a number of costumes are tried. As the inner play proceeds, scene by scene, the conflict of the outer one, the rehearsal, becomes apparent. The leading lady of the piece is disturbed by the fact that the absent author, supported by the director, continues to re-write Joan into more and more conscious compromise with the historical conditions of her period. Feeling this is mistaken, she threatens to leave the part. However, in the last prison scene, where the final test of the Saint's faith is enacted and she is left to the executioners, the actress concedes that this ultimate act justifies the vacillations of the earlier scenes and that she will, at long last, be able to interpret the rôle. It will perhaps be obvious, even in this brief synopsis, that Mr. Anderson's gravest danger will be the halo-ing of his actress at the expense of his Saint. Certainly his conception of the Maid seemed lamentably contrived and complex to me. But another dimension must honestly be added to the discussion when one records that it is Ingrid Bergman who is playing the parts and unquestionably maintaining a high even balance throughout. Her Joan is really clear: quick, sturdy, very young; and playing herself, she explores every humorous and thoughtful possibility of the lines. Most important, she manages to cast over all a kind of daring simplicity not any way dependent upon trick or intellection, but surely upon feeling. All of her gestures are large, straight; and physically and emotionally she has grace. It is indeed a shining job, and, I think, rears the play. I do think for the enormous draughty reaches of the Alvin she could project a little more, as I found it difficult to hear and sometimes to see her, as well as the other players, but this will be, one imagines, a question of time and practice.

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For the rest, the cast is uniformly excellent on the whole. Sam Wanamaker, in spite of random Lunt touches, good; Barry Kroeger delivering his best work; Kevin McCarthy, fine. Romney Brent as the Dauphin is a disappointment, seeming rooted by his costume to the floor, an unnervous portrayal. Lee Simonson's arrangement of no set and only occasional dresses seemed perfect: the author's intriguing plan of business gear scattered among a few armored and robed figures, neither exaggerated, nor sloppily done. I wish there could be more light, simply to *see*.

Finally, it seems to me the basic notion of presenting the theater "in progress" is surely an extra attraction of Mr. Anderson's piece. I have of course no possible right to be lending either his plot or its fable around the world, but I would dear like to see what the Messrs. Cocteau, Giono, Brecht, or any Thomas Anonymous, would do with it. It is something to have approached a classic form, and I think Mr. Anderson has done this. If he has not managed to fill it, it is at least renewed among us, and even somewhat extended. (*At the Alvin.*)

The Fatal Weakness

I HAD BETTER confess at once that the combination of George Kelly and Ina Claire seems to me only a little more delighting than the possibility of Mr. Kelly combined with anyone else. I do not understand Mr. Kelly very well. I feel he has unquestionably an astute psychological interest in and knowledge of women, of a kind. But these women seem to exist in a vacuum. Here, delineating the frustrations of a middle-aged wife, forced to divorce her husband and suffering only from preconceived notions of romance, he has written infinitesimally around the incident; so infinitestimally and repetitiously in fact, that one feels exhaustedly his findings must be provable. But at the same time, as no time nor place-signature marks his program, one is left constantly inwardly inquiring, where IS this weird (Oenslager) overdecorated apartment? where ARE these tiny events? Perhaps the nearest I can relate Mr. Kelly's observations to my own will be far-off overheard conferences of Aunts and Grandmothers when discussions of shore *vs.* mountains for vacations were serious; when servants were steady; and when, although innumerable people were dead or dying no one had ever been killed. I guess it is safest for me to nominate the piece as an exercise in nostalgia and quite frankly to state that while I suspect its author of excellence, I cannot tell what this may be, or why or when. As for Miss Claire, she is again light, misty, quick as a wink, impudent (including an accordion-pleated bustle), altogether adorable. How I would love to hear her say something. Margaret Douglass's cool, drawling, irrevocable support as a "woman friend" is wonderful to watch. (*At the Royale.*)

Another Part of the Forest

EMPLOYING a "Jalna" formula, evidently, Lillian Hellman this time deals with the wicked Hubbards of "The Little Foxes" in an anterior situation. It makes a good evening, but I think that is all. Miss Hellman

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does not appear to be interested in the root or cause of her family's evil, but rather in particularizing, or melodramatizing, them and their action. And I think this is Americanly wrong. It is on the part of the Father of the piece that she goes off especially, and sprawls her final act in an attempt to provide farce and sentiment where only character should be necessary. I think if she had read, or re-read, Thomas Beer (the "Hanna" particularly) she would have found securer facts to document her work. It is true the American millionaire of her chosen period of the 80's (and before and after, in whatever section of the country) is the real American eccentric and almost invariably a personality. To build him as a villain, rather than merely villainous, and to cram the works with verging madness, incipient incest, and such fakements as motivating Bibles, pistols and envelopes of money, is simply special—not valuable—and pulls her whole effort down to the sordid, silly "shocker" class. I feel she must realize her problem is far more psychologically interesting than that. Working under her own direction for the first time however, her cast is quite honestly superb. An infant of twenty years, Patricia Neal, is a startling young Regina; and Mildred Dunnock, Margaret Phillips and Scott McKay are severally splendid. Leo Genn is openly a Cockney Alabamaniac, if such a thing is imaginable, and powerful in spite of it. And Mielziner's settings are, as always, both provocative and useful. (*At the Fulton.*) KAPPO PHELAN.

Look Away Look Away

BIGGEST surprise about Walt Disney's new movie, in which he uses straight film technique to tell the main story, is that the sequences with live characters are more engaging than the inserted cartoons. First thing you know Disney's studio will make regular movies which could easily compete with Hollywood's best. If it does this, however, I hope Mr. Disney will accept a little advice on social content; for *"Song of the South"* requires its audiences to adjust themselves mentally to a once-upon-a-time period when White Folk relaxed in ease on their large southern estates while Negroes, though apparently treated well, did all the hard labor.

Employing excellent technicolor and a large cast including such familiar actors as Lucile Watson, Hattie McDaniel and Ruth Warrick, "Song of the South" tells a tender story about a troubled family who return to the old plantation. To amuse and enlighten the unhappy little boy (played with charming boyishness by Bobby Driscoll) ancient Uncle Remus tells some of those famous stories about Br'er Rabbit who, though smaller than his foes, always manages to outsmart the more formidable Br'er Fox and Br'er Bear. These tales are visualized in animated cartoons which unfortunately are not Disney at his best. The drawings are less imaginative than usual and the characters, even Br'er Rabbit himself, lack the cuteness or roguishness that won us to Jimmy Cricket and Donald Duck. But James Baskett who plays Uncle Remus is a delight. This fine Negro actor conveys a warmth and understanding that makes us love him just as the little boy does as he listens wide-eyed to the tales. I'm not certain how other children will take to the more frightening episodes in the cartoons, or how grown-ups will react to the film's outmoded social viewpoint, but everyone will enjoy the film's cheering songs and the comforting relationships between the old man and small boy.

Another picture looking to the past for its theme proved more to my liking for its achievement as true cinematic art. Like the animated cartoon, the "western" is a manifestation of modern art in which movies excel. And when John Ford makes a "western," it's good. *"My Darling Clementine"* uses an old story, which Grade B horse operas have practically worn out, but uses it so well under Ford's direction of a noteworthy cast, with Samuel G. Engel's and Winston Miller's realistic script, some stunning scenery and effective black-and-white photography by Joe MacDonald, that the finished picture provides first-rate entertainment for adults. Once again the Earp brothers (played by Henry Fonda, Tim Holt, Ward Bond) come to Tombstone, Arizona, in the 1880s and clean up the place so that honest folk can live there in peace and order. Among the many disregarders of the law with whom the Earps have to contend are: a gone-to-seed doctor fascinated by his own toughness (Victor Mature), his fiery girlfriend (Linda Darnell) and the entire Clanton family who are a nasty brood of varmints led by Pa (Walter Brennan) whose principal motto is: "When you pull a gun, kill a man."

Director Ford mixes these standard "western" paraphernalia with his own recipe for exciting cinema and you get a film that has convincing characterizations, some thrilling rough-and-tumble, good humorous touches and suspense that holds your interest to the end. The title rôle is played by lovely Cathy Downs, but her romance (switching from Mature to Fonda) is definitely understated. It is interesting to note how Ford injects realism into his picture through simple homey episodes with ordinary people, with clear handsome photography that contrasts bright open-air scenes with murky interiors, with unusual sound effects and silence (when silence is more startling than words or music or noise). I don't think Ford's new film is up to his earlier "Stagecoach," but "My Darling Clementine" is still a superior movie.

Audiences are seldom drawn into a theater by a short, but if the new March of Time is on your bill be sure to stay for it. *"The American Cop"* has a quality that makes it more exciting than many a feature. You will be impressed with the large field covered by your local policeman. His job includes all kinds of emergencies from robberies to riots to the handling of suicide attempts and sudden childbirth. The film moves rapidly as it shows the tests, examinations, training for cophood and many of the routine duties. Special honor is paid to New York's "finest" as a whole and to the policeman who recently solved a double murder. Some of the scenes are staged, of course, but in MOT's lively style they make truth more absorbing than fiction. Furthermore, with its constructive propaganda, this interesting short should increase everyone's respect for the American cop.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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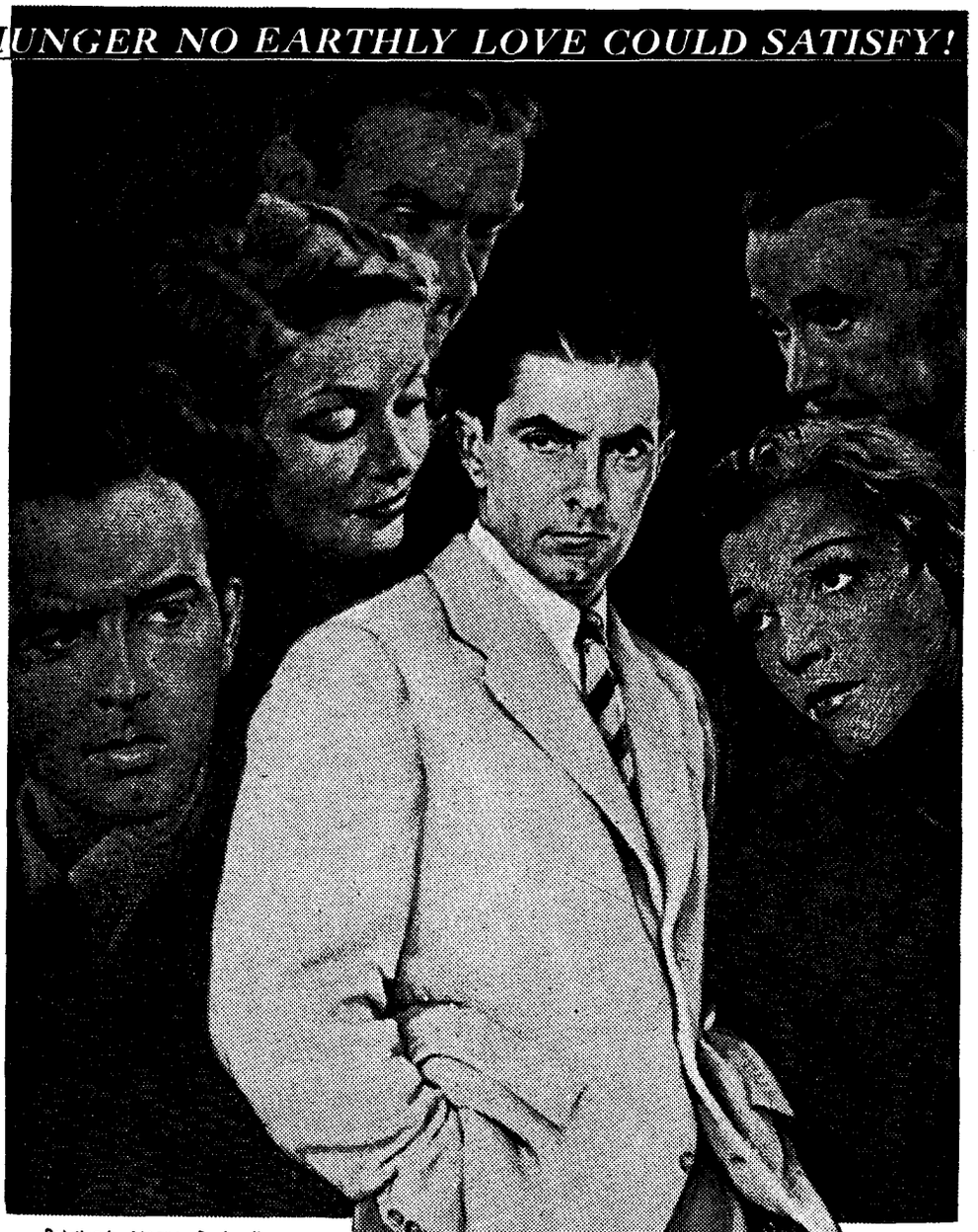

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Books of the Week

Four Quartets Rehearsed. A Commentary on T. S. Eliot's Cycle of Poems. Raymond Preston. Sheed. $1.00.

DR. PRESTON understands that a paraphrase does not yield "possession" of a poem, but he does hope that his studious reading of Mr. Eliot's "Four Quartets" will bring readers closer toward understanding when they read the poetry itself. There are essays which can do this—Professor Matthiessen's work on Eliot is a *locus classicus*—but Mr. Preston's essay is a singular disappointment.

Under Mr. Preston's treatment, these absolutely spherical poems are flattened into plane dimensions. He tends to reduce whole passages to single "meanings," and these sentiments turn out to be familiar axioms of classical philosophy and theology. The point, however, is that Mr. Eliot does not "mean" one thing; if anything, he means many things at once, but even that must be put more exactly: he means what several meanings mean when, in one ambivalent line, they are put in live contact with each other—for the poem is not in the multiplicity of these things, but in their simultaneity. Thus we cannot diminish the haunting rose-garden image of the Quartets to the observation, "What matters is the fullness of being." The very experience here is elusive ("Quick now, here now"), so that whatever language Mr. Eliot uses for that experience (and it happens that his language in these passages has chiefly a sexual reference), he intends it to be disturbed by a number of other "meanings."

Mr. Preston fails, also, to trace the architecture of the four poems as an ensemble—the placing of the recurring motifs, the use of the four elements, the devices for the amazing transitions. Surely, the meaning is as much in the form as in the matter. And even within each quartet taken separately, Mr. Preston makes no adequate analysis of structure and proportion. Finally, he has not begun to examine the earlier work (he stretches "Family Reunion" for most of his references) for the light it gives the Quartets and receives from them. There is a new pulsation in the *scherzo,* "The dove descending breaks the air," when we remember how the author of "Sweeney" and the "Preludes" stood in the squalor of the late London afternoon, moved by "The notion of some infinitely gentle / Infinitely suffering thing"; and there is new pathos in the isolation of Prufrock, when in the eternal present of Mr. Eliot's wilderness, he hears the sigh of "Burnt Norton": "Ridiculous the waste sad time / Stretching before and after."

What is basic in our dissatisfaction with Mr. Preston's essay is that it is not what the Quartets finally mean that counts, but the *way* to their meaning. Their puns are tensions of meaning, conflicts of purpose; their drama moves from rejection to hesitation to rejection; each time the cogitation is troubled, each time we have only "a way of putting it, not very satisfactory." For those whose way is the search for the flickering moment of illumination, the journey forward to go back, the search for the beginning in the end, there is no ambiguity in the uneasy metaphors of the *via negationis;* for those who are undefeated only because they "have gone on trying," it is not unjust that the triumphal march be a broken music.

HENRY RAGO.

The Lost War. Masuo Kato. Knopf. $2.75.

IT WAS looking at a familiar picture from a different angle. The remembered outlines were there, the vivid colors, the correlation of objects. Only the line of vision was changed. This was the experience in reading Masuo Kato's "The Lost War," a volume every Pacific veteran should buy, and all Americans could profitably examine.

The author, a Domei reporter, began the war as an internee at Washington, and saw it ended as the accredited representative of his news agency on the surrender deck of the Missouri. He writes from the viewpoint of a Japanese who saw the alternatives which faced his country, deplored the choice that was made and was in a position to know a great deal more than his countrymen about the course of the conflict. He writes with restraint, and carefully calculates the relative importance of the factors that led to the "Empire in ashes."

The general outlines are familiar, but the details are revealing. The deficiencies of the Japanese war production were evident enough when we saw the country after the surrender. The dangerous food shortages were visible in the faces of the conquered. The dazed acceptance of defeat by this confused and bewildered people impressed us as we wandered about the ruins of cities or rode through the unmatched loveliness of the countryside. We heard a great deal from the Jesuit fathers at their university in Tokyo about the horrors of the raids, and noted how easily in conversation they could recall the dates of each of the big attacks. But it takes a book of this kind to trace the gradual ebbing of Japanese morale and physical stamina; to describe the reaction, in a style approximating Hersey's "Hiroshima," to one B-29 blast that killed 100,000 and left a million and a half homeless; to chart the slow paralysis that set in from our sea-air blockade.

It tells, too, some things that were not common knowledge: the divisions within the government, notably between the Army and the Navy, that hastened the end. From this testimony, Japan lost battles unnecessarily because of disunity in the high command. Rivalry between the services led to the Army and Navy maintaining separate weather observatories, concealing facts from each other, refusing to exchange technical information, failing to coordinate convoy protection and competing in every field for matériel and prestige.

As the author was escorted past long lines of sailors drawn up on the deck of the Missouri, the bluejackets stretched for a view and murmured excitedly, "Japs!" "There was no expression of enmity, merely intense curiosity." It is my feeling that here a good reporter sensed America's secret weapon.

J. N. MOODY.

Frontier on the Potomac. Jonathan Daniels. Macmillan. $2.75.

MR. DANIELS' description of Washington personalities and pressures is reflective rather than profound, entertaining rather than crusading. He urges no particular reforms for our federal government. After recounting many of its human weaknesses, he ventures the opinion that it will survive in the future, as in the past, come Democrats or Republicans. And barring atomic accidents.

His tone is light, calm, and kindly. His bent is mildly progressive, but not once does he view with alarm. In

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fact he does not take himself too seriously. By admission he is neither political scientist nor vendor of inside information, but just a reporter. Yet he reports with such frankness, discernment, and fullness of human detail that his book would admirably complement the more staid texts in American government.

On second thought, his Congressmen are too convivial to be unveiled to school-age youth. The W.C.T.U. and those Congressmen who are dry *de jure* if not *de facto* would object in unison. And in the chapter on the press, Mr. La Guardia is allowed to refer disparagingly to Mr. Hearst's origin. School authorities would question the language, if not the thought.

Let the recommendation, then, be limited to adult citizens. Read by enough of them, this genial exposé would correct the generally distorted and over-simple picture of an alien Washington created by newspaper and radio capsules. It would induce a more judicial attitude toward Mr. Truman and his 200,000 assistants in the Capital, as human beings tangled in a tremendous job.

Daniels doesn't know all the important figures around the Capital, but he has a line or a conversation or an observation tentatively placing and characterizing most of them. A few are merely types, with or without their right names.

Apparently many a special interview went into the preparation of this book. Before that, there were Daniels' experience and contacts as a reporter in the 20's, as assistant director of the Office of Civilian Defense in 1942, and as press secretary to the President in 1944.

Those who come closest to exciting the author's admiration are not always popular heroes. They include Fred Vinson, Sidney Hillman, Archibald MacLeish, Henry Wallace, Cordell Hull, Jim Carey, Sam Rayburn, Robert Hannegan, Tom Stokes. As might be expected, he is not enthusiastic about Senators Bilbo and O'Daniel. For nearly everyone else, notably Tommy the Cork, he finds some commendable quality or at least a plausible excuse.

Daniels refuses to be exercised over the scandal of pressure groups. He refers briefly to the overburdening demands upon Senators and Representatives which prevent them from being statesmen even when they are so inclined. He defends the "bureaucrats" as more or less able administrators of an inevitably big business. His conclusion, if any, is that Washington, like the rest of the country, is a mixture of good and bad, and will be bettered not so much through institutional changes as through improvement in people, voters and voted for.

J. M. HAYES.

The Seventh of October. Jules Romains. Knopf. $3.00.

"MEN OF GOOD WILL," M. Romains' social history of France between the years 1908 and 1933, now comes to an end with "The Seventh of October." When M. Romains began it, some fifteen years ago, the events which were to shatter the foundations of western civilization already loomed dark on the horizon and although the cloud was perhaps no bigger than a man's hand, there were many who saw it. But while brave Cassandras all over the world were decrying the developments in Germany, M. Romains (as he later explained in his strangely megalomaniacal articles in the *Saturday Evening Post*) was busy spending his energies

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as a self-constituted ambassador of the policy of appeasement. Not only did he fail to predict the war and the defeat, but he forebore to align himself with resistant France. Yet now, having reserved for the last volume his serious diatribe against Hitler and dictatorships in general, he has been elected by a reborn France to the *Academie Française*. Such is the irony of our day.

The narrative interest of "The Seventh of October" is negligible. Spanning, as did the opening volume of the series, one single day, the book makes a half-hearted attempt to wind up the affairs of some of the chief characters and give some inkling of their destiny. It shows the two prized friends, Jallez and Jerphanion, on the threshold of middle age, with Jallez intent on marriage and Jerphanion at logger heads with the government he serves; it shows Clanricard, the honest pedagogue, trying to spread the truth among his pupils; and it shows Havercamp, the international scamp, hiding under an assumed name in Yugoslavia. But the scenes are fragmentary, unresolved, and as a whole the book stands less on its feet than any of the others.

Just before the last two chapters, there is inserted a fifty-page tract on the history of Europe in which all the past centuries are foreshortened to make way for M. Romains's philosophical explanation of our times. If this is an apologia, if it is intended to strike the chief chord on which "Men of Good Will" is based, it fails. Its sweeping generalizations cannot be called scientific, and its place in a work of fiction is open to question.

For anyone who has followed the fourteen volumes, it is a sad thing to remember how certain it seemed at the start that, despite their deviousness, they would lead eventually to some new light of truth. But the promise of the vast scheme M. Romains had in mind, dwindling gradually ever since the high-pitched recapitulation of France's great battle in the volume called "Verdun," has now faded away. The book closes with an unfinished platitude about our imperfect world and a tacit admission of its futility.

VIRGILIA PETERSON.

Petrarch, Sonnets and Songs. Translated by Anna Maria Armi. Italian-English Edition. Introduction by Theodor E. Mommsen. Pantheon. $3.50.

THERE WAS a time when everyone who read for pleasure knew Petrarch. But few people in the United States now read Italian and the young moderns, in any case, are rather afraid of the past and especially afraid of anything before Rimbaud. How long, therefore, it has been since an edition of Patrarch for the general reader appeared, I could not guess.

This new edition is well printed, easy to hold and pleasant to read. But the most important thing is that it presents Petrarch as if he were a modern poet as indeed in these poems he is. It is extraordinary how fresh these poems are: it is as if their beautiful Italian melodies were written within the past ten years. Books which share in the intellectual fashions and forces of their own day with rare exceptions seem to belong to that one day. But the self-revelation of the human heart is timeless. The poems perhaps seem nearer to us because Petrarch's working copy of the poems, with his extremely interesting marginal notations, is preserved in the Vatican Library, so that one can follow the process of the creation of poems written 600 years ago as if they were of our own day.

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The Italian and English texts face each other on opposite pages, as in the other Pantheon bi-lingual editions. The translation of Anna Maria Armi follows the verse structure of the original. Although it necessarily lacks the melodious freshness and ease of Petrarch, it enables a reader with weak or rusty Italian to read the original with pleasure. The introduction by Theodor Mommsen is good except that its view is restricted to literature alone —which is to link Petrarch only with the classic world and the Renaissance. Petrarch was a contemporary of Giotto and Simone Martini, Giovanni Pisano and Arnolfo di Cambio—the greatest Gothic painters, sculptors and architects whom we know by name and in sufficient detail to feel acquainted with them as individual human beings. Petrarch thus lived in the flowering of the high Gothic in Italy and his achievement is an illustration of the complexity of the Italian genius, from which the past was never absent even when the present was most vital and creative.

E. P. RICHARDSON.

The Great Religions of the Modern World. Ed. by Edward J. Jurji. Princeton. $3.75.

NOW AND THEN a book does come along which fills a long-existing if unnoticed need, a book which makes one ask, "Why hasn't this been done before?" "The Great Religions of the Modern World" is such a book. It is not a text on the history of religion nor on the philosophy of religion. Much less is it a volume of comparative religion, no pony-sized "Golden Bough." It is simply a book in which the ten major religions of today's world are discussed by an equal number of authorities. The presentation is expository, rather than argumentative. Each contributor has made a determined effort to be objective, with varying degrees of success. The fact that some of the contributors are adherents of the religion which they discuss, while others are not, makes for an unevenness in critical appraisal. A further obstacle to objectivity is that detachment in religion is as difficult as impartiality in politics. Professor Hromádka, for example, strays from his own topic of Eastern Orthodoxy to make unfavorable comparisons with Protestantism and Catholicism. Professor Mackay in turn, treating the subject of Protestantism, exhibits a distinctly anti-Catholic bias, even crediting the victory in World War II to the non-Catholicism of the victors. The two most straightforward accounts in the book are those on Judaism by Dr. Abraham Neuman, editor of the *Jewish Quarterly Review,* and on Catholicism by Father Gerald Walsh, editor of the Jesuit quarterly, *Thought.* Both men hew faithfully to their respective lines, without innuendo or depreciation.

To the Catholic reader, the most impressive thing in "The Great Religions of the Modern World" will be Father Walsh's article on Roman Catholicism. He has achieved a masterpiece of summarization. His twenty-nine pages are not a cold and bloodless condensation; he has given us instead the warmth-with-clarity perfection of an exquisitely-cut cameo. Here Christ and His Apostles, the Fathers, the Scholastics, the Saints, pass in quick but living witness to a living Faith. It is hard to estimate the long thought and the patient re-writing that must have gone into this work of Father Walsh's. Even to the priest reader, it brings into sharper focus the overall view of the history and the content of the faith. Tak-

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ing as his theme Christ—the Way, the Truth, and the Life—Father Walsh pictures the Church as a Code to be lived, a Creed to be believed, and a Community to be shared. Through his pages Oneness runs as a constant theme: oneness of the Trinity, oneness of Christ's Person, oneness of Christ's members. With it all he is a realist, and resists any temptation to over-idealization. There is a frank, if brief, recognition of sin and human failure, there is a raised eyebrow to the "World of Tomorrow."

Since any intelligent reader can easily discount its defects, "The Great Religions of the Modern World" is a thoroughly recommendable book, for the reader of education and discernment who seeks profit in his reading. It is a book that is broadening in the best sense of the word, if only for its demonstration of how the great basic and primitive truths of God shine, even through distortion and errancy, in the major faiths of man.

LEO J. TRESE.

By Vote of the People. Willis J. Bellinger. Scribner's $3.00.

MR. BALLINGER'S book is "dedicated to the proposition that political liberty is possible only in a soundly functioning capitalistic society." Corollary to or illustrative of this rather gratuitous proposition and its monotonous refrain is the author's "original" conclusion that democracies usually perish from economic causes "by vote of the people." He proves to his own complete satisfaction that a long succession of free peoples during the last 2300 years or more have voted themselves into slavery via the age-old route of government spending. The reviewer is not qualified to pass judgment on this amazingly simple and unqualified conclusion, but he is understandably inclined to be skeptical in the face of occasional statements like the following: "Methods of terror did not make Hitler a dictator. The force which did was *entirely economic in its nature.*" (Italics added) All the more reason, therefore, for Senator Taft's misgivings about the validity and the justice of the Nuremberg trials.

Ballinger's definition of a "soundly functioning capitalistic society" (without which, be it remembered, political liberty is impossible) is free competition—period. He believes with all his heart and soul that there is an economic "natural law—the essence of a genuine capitalistic economy," which, to our very real peril, "has been practically abolished." It has been abolished in the United States by the steady trend towards monopoly and an accompanying concentration of wealth, which trend was only consolidated (and could only be consolidated) by Roosevelt's fantastic spending policies, by his failure or refusal to enforce the Sherman Act, and by his encouragement of monopoly unionism.

The remedy? An immediate return to competition pure and simple. The alternative is slavery.

Ballinger is an honest "liberal" of the old school—a type of liberal which will soon be almost completely extinct. His devotion to free competition derives from a profound desire to extend to the average man an equitable share of the enormous wealth of the United States. It would be a mistake, therefore, to identify him with those others (and their name is legion) who are advocating free competition with their tongue in their cheek and from motives which are sometimes less altruistic than Ballinger's.

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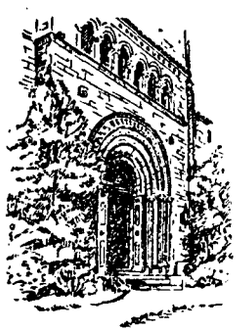

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not conceal the fallacies which are inherent in his theory. Basically his trouble is probably philosophical—a failure to understand that man is by nature a social animal and a consequent failure to understand that economic life must be "planned" and patterned according to all of the implications of that primary fact. Ballinger is convinced that *"any attempt* by government, business, and labor to plan production necessarily leads to autocratic government"—again "by vote of the people." The contrast between this theory and the teaching of the social encyclicals is a contrast, not so much between two conflicting systems of economics as between two conflicting and divergent philosophies on the nature of man.

Ballinger's almost hypnotic addiction to his own oversimplified thesis leads him at times to be somewhat less than accurate and fair to the opposition. His analysis of the Full Employment Bill, for example, and his unblushing caricature of the economic program of the CIO-PAC are hardly worthy of a scholar. The pertinent sentences deserve to be quoted verbatim as evidence of the lengths to which all of us—even honest men like Mr. Ballinger—will sometimes go to win an argument: "On Capitol Hill the Murray bill, sponsored by Senator James Murray, declares it to be the duty of government to provide every citizen with a job. His method—a limitless spending program by government. . . . The whole (sic) program of the powerful CIO-Political Action Committee is to create abundance for the American people by having government *spend countless billions on all sorts of projects"* (author's italics). There are other examples of the same sort of carelessness, which, be it said however, is not at all typical of the book as a whole.

Ballinger is closer to the side of the angels than are many of the other American proponents of free competition. But the angels will be happier when he begins to channel his abundant decency and generosity into more constructive proposals. And if they were to be consulted about a reading list, they would probably ask him at the outset to run through *Quadragesimo Anno* as a basis for further discussion.

GEORGE G. HIGGINS.

A Century of the Catholic Essay. Raphael H. Gross, C.PP.S. Lippincott. $3.50.

IN A PREFACE to this collection of forty-six essays Father Gross says that he is mainly interested in bringing to the attention of the general reader the work, in essay form, of those English and American Catholics who have been stirred by the resurgence of Catholic culture which began about a hundred years ago with the conversion of John Henry Newman. He will also be pleased, he adds, if some find here "freshness and artistic excellence"; and he hopes, finally, that still others will use the collection "as supplementary reading in any course on the essay or on Catholic literature." This book may, to some extent, fulfill all those purposes, but it should have particular success with people who are fond of owlish writing.

The first half of this anthology is composed of informal pieces intended to show the Catholic writer during moments of "good talk," when he "steps down from his high purpose to chat familiarly with his friends on any and all subjects." It is this first section that I find difficult to review with any enthusiasm. With the exception of a couple of reliable anthology signposts, such as Newman's

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"Definition of a Gentleman," and Alice Meynell's "The Rhythm of Life," Father Gross has assembled a trying amount of that winking, chuckling, rib-poking, and sentence-balancing which is often said to represent the grand tradition of informal writing in English. It is possible to see in writing of this kind—as Father Gross does—an indication of all-purpose Catholicism; but it is equally reasonable to suspect that this chummy rhetoric merely shows that Catholic writers share the world's sinful admiration for whimsy.

The essays in the last half of the book are concerned with more earnest matters and there is much less time spent on the side-slips and barrel-rolls of anthology style. Cardinal Newman is represented in this section by "Knowledge and Learning," and I would divide the rest of the honors between C. C. Martindale (Hermann the Cripple); Christopher Dawson (Christian Freedom); Ronald Knox (On Humour and Satire); and Sister M. Madeleva (Chaucer's Nuns). Father Gross has limited his anthology to essays by people who write in English, so there's no use getting angry because some people aren't present. Nevertheless, it seems to me that his book would have been much more valuable, and certainly much more closely connected with the Catholic resurgence if he had forgotten all about most of the entries in the first section and had included instead some translations from the Continent, particularly France.

JOHN BRODERICK.

A Critical History of English Poetry. Herbert J. C. Grierson and J. C. Smith. Oxford. $0.00.

THIS WORK, by two well-known English scholars, traces the history of English poetry from Anglo-Saxon days down to 1939. It is not only a scholarly record of the development of the various types of poetry through succeeding generations, but is also a *critical* history in the sense that each poet is judged, in the last analysis, not by the literary fashion and theory of his own day, but by a definite and objective standard—the poetic faith of Smith and Grierson. To a certain extent, therefore, your estimate of this work will depend upon whether or not you agree with the concept of poetry applied by these critics. The reader may wish that they had defined this concept at the beginning of the volume, but it is at once clear that for them great poetry is that of the romantic school—the poetry of Wordsworth, Spenser and Shakespeare. Originality, inspiration, and some sort of mysterious vision are essential notes of the poet.

Judged by these rules, Dryden and Pope just miss being a success. They are accomplished versifiers and brilliant wits, but not great poets. Dryden lacks "an element of pure beauty"; Pope's satires are inspired by no large view of human nature, and lack something called "dark misanthropy." These poets may take some comfort from the knowledge that Chaucer, before them, had not done much better. He had no great lyric talent, and possessed little invention in the narrower sense; but he could tell a merry tale better than anyone but Burns. There is nothing wrong, perhaps, with these verdicts, if you feel, as the authors seem to, that really great poetry has little to do with reason, and nothing to do with laughter.

One thing, however, I found definitely annoying: the constant use of Wordsworth as the measure of genuine poetry. There is no objection to his "healing power" and

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his "visitations from the living God," or to the claim that he reformed poetic diction, proclaimed "the true nature, end, and best themes of poetry, and the true function of the poet in society" (p. 360). This is not too much to allow his enthusiasts. But when he is repeatedly anticipated throughout the restoration and eighteenth century, cropping up at every turn in such expressions as "You must not approach Pope's *Pastorals* with Wordsworth in your mind"; or, "But what does Pope mean by Nature? Certainly not what Wordsworth meant," then one not unreasonably complains that Wordsworth is beginning to get under foot, and wishes he could be made to wait for his cue.

However much you may disagree with some of its judgments, this remains a scholarly and useful book. One of its chief virtues is that it has cut down biographical matter to a bare minimum; the reader is not hampered by endless detail of the poet's early life, his father's occupation, etc.

A. P. CAMPBELL.

Blind Alley. Georges Simenon. Reynal & Hitchcock. $2.50.

THIS melodramatic study of the disintegration of character, set in what was once the Côte d'Azur of the Riviera, is an unpleasant echo from a vanished Europe. For its Belgian author, now living in Quebec, squalid lives lived amid natural and artificial splendor do not seem to have lost their charm. But most American readers will find little to reward them in this sordid tale of the exploitation of a rich and vulgar Frenchwoman by the White Russian adventurer Vladimir, who has a conscience but no scruples. M. Simenon was happier in his monthly Inspector Maigret thrillers than in this pretentious failure.

MASON WADE.

Animal Tales, edited by Ivan T. Sanderson. Knopf. $5.00.

A PERFECT Christmas book: the only trouble is that no one who ever saw it lying on a bookstall could possibly wait until Christmas to get it, and if they bought it to give away, they would never bring themselves to part with it. For here are the best of all the classic animal tales: excerpts from "Bambi," from Grey Owl and Ernest Thompson Seton, from Cherry Kearton's "Island of Penguins" and from "Jock of the Bushveld," from "Chin-pao and the Giant Pandas," from "The Call of the Koala" and "The Way of a Lion," as well as from over two dozen more stories of equal fame. They have been chosen to circle the globe, and it is good to be reminded that this one world is not only ours, but is shared by all sentient beings, so that when we jeopardize ourselves through our own criminal idiocy, we may bring all life to ruin with us in our folly. There is no age that will not want this book: it is equally suitable for child or adult, for banker or broker, diplomat or doctor, for gentle and simple.

A. F.

Blue Angels and Whales. Robert Gibbings. Dutton. $3.00.

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Next Week in The Commonweal

GARDEN BY THE SEA, by Eugene Bagger, presently residing in the Bahamas, is an eloquent non-political tribute to Portugal, whose existence "signifies a triumph of the human will over the geographical and historical environment, a victory of the spirit won against overwhelming physical odds." A warm historical interpretation.

ODYSSEY OF A VIENNESE ANTI-FASCIST, by Dr. Alfred Missong, noted Austrian scholar and editor, is a stirring account of flight, exile, imprisonment and liberation from 1938 down to the end of the European war. A series of set-tos with Nazi conquerors, secret police and other totalitarians.

AN AMERICAN PUBLISHER, by Harry Lorin Binsse, is an enthusiastic narrative of the career of Charles Scribner's Sons and the fascinating new volume by Roger Burlingame, which in such an unstuffy fashion unfolds the publisher's trials and triumphs.

Also lively staff and contributor comment on the books, plays, movies and headlines of the week.

inhabits the reefs of Tahiti, Bermuda and the Red Sea. His personal observations through the window of a diving helmet are interspersed with local anecdotes and quotations from professional naturalists. Many of the drawings were made on sheets of celluloid-like xylonite on the floor of the ocean; this technique unfortunately precluded the use of color, which is so salient a feature of tropical marine life. But the text includes color to spare, and a full quota of rambling charm. Gibbings' approach is essentially that of the amateur, seeking not so much to satisfy his readers' curiosity as to stimulate interest in a fascinating hobby; he does not, for example, caption his graceful drawings of individual fish and growths, although these can sometimes be identified from the text. For the benefit of those who wish more facts and detail he includes a short bibliography.

DAVID BURNHAM.

Forlorn Sunset. Michael Sadleir. Farrar, Straus. $3.00.

MICHAEL SADLEIR has built his novel around a reconstruction of Victorian London, based on a very thorough and careful knowledge of slum areas and their evils. There is no question of his competence. He keeps his characters in hand and has them show up at the right moments with the right background behind them. His story of Lottie Heape, a prostitute whose fortunes balance between the evils of the rich and poor but who finishes off the book as a proper heroine, is quite enough to keep you from nodding in your chair. But, perhaps because of a need to fit plot to researches, the novel seems compartmentalized. New characters walk in every few chapters and have to be explained in detail. There is a kind of wooden placing of situations and events.

The style is well loaded with some honored literary clichés. "Horrid," "pitiful," "fearful" are favorite adjectives.

"Forlorn Sunset" is the kind of book which it is difficult to overload with criticism. It is a perfectly sound job and good reading so far as it goes. There are no concepts or ideas in it to get excited about. The great trouble I suppose, is that it is much too respectable.

JOHN HAY.

CONTRIBUTORS

Anne FREMANTLE is an English writer now living in New York; she is planning a biography of Charles de Foucauld.
Dorothy DAY was one of the founders of the *Catholic Worker* and has written several books, among them "House of Hospitality."
Francois MAURIAC is a distinguished French novelist; his "Woman of the Pharisees" has just appeared in an English translation.
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David BURNHAM is at work on another novel.
John HAY writes from Brwester, Mass.

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